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# TRAVELER

ALL TRAVEL, ALL THE TIME | April 2011

## 80 HOTELS YOU'LL LOVE

Discover the True South America:  
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### A VERY PERSONAL NEW YORK

INSIDERS OFFER  
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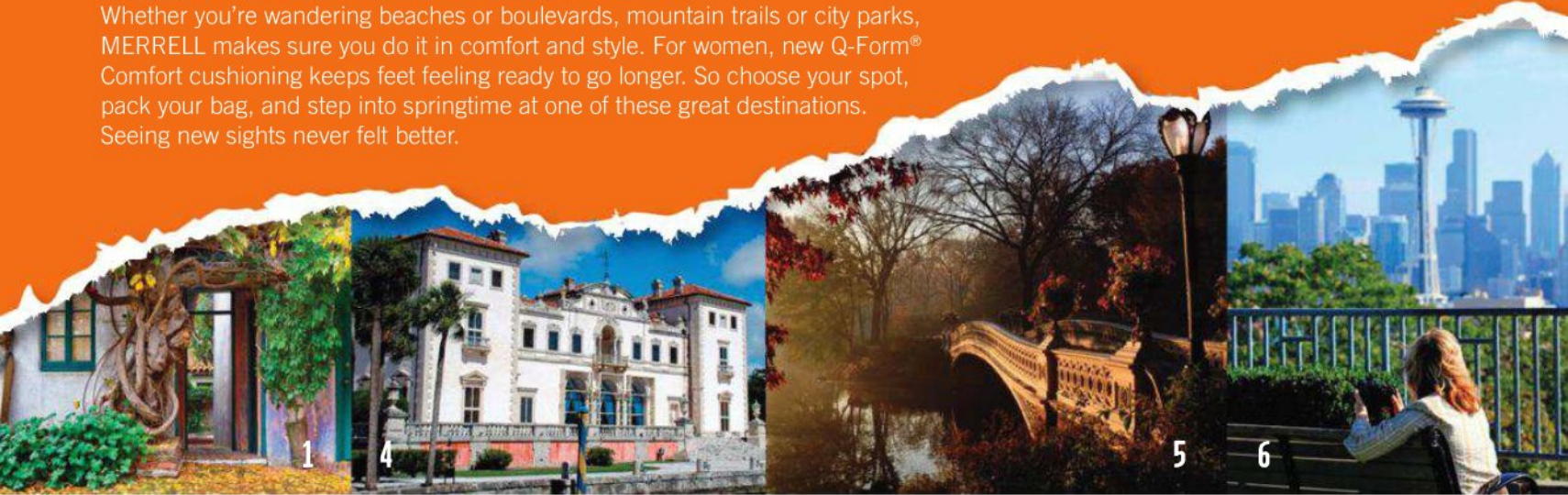




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## 1 California

### Santa Barbara Up Close

Follow in the footsteps of Julia Child, who lived here later in her life. She loved the wharf and the ocean and was a regular at the Saturday morning farmers market. Child would take visitors to the pier for breakfast or lunch. Beyond that she had haunts throughout town. To this day, La Super-Rica Taqueria sells a slew of tortillas as the result of Child's fond endorsement. Step right up!

## 2 Colorado

### Window Shopping Boulder's Pearl Mall

"Mall" is misleading. This artsy, bohemian stretch of streets up in the Rockies, closed to cars, is wide open to the trees and sky. It's a retail wonderland

of truly unique shops: books, antiques, jewelry, kitchenware, clothes. Lose track of time as you drift from one store to the next, resisting or submitting to temptation. There are benches and cafés galore for sitting back and people-watching.

## 3 Texas

### Joining the Locals on Austin's Sixth Street

Sixth Street is lined with many historic buildings dating from the late 1800s. This is where hip Austin comes out to play at night. By day, stroll the seven blocks between Congress Avenue and I-35 and have fun deciding among all the after-dark live music options. Casual attire is just fine. As you mosey along Sixth, art galleries, cafés, shops, and restaurants will vie for your attention. Sandra Bullock's place, Bess Bistro, is the celebrity haunt du jour.

## 4 Florida

### Elegantly Miami

As though following a page from the Gilded Age playbook, waterfront Vizcaya was built in the early 20th century to resemble a lavish 400-year-old Italian villa. It was the winter home of American agricultural industrialist James Deering. The mansion's several dozen rooms display no small measure of Old World glitz. Walk around and be amazed. The estate is also known for its formal gardens inspired by Italian Renaissance palace gardens.

## 5 New York

### Central Park Sojourn

You could explore for a week and still not find all the magic spots tucked among the 843 acres of New York City's green

core. The zoo is tiny but worth a spin. Heading north, to circle the Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis Reservoir—1.58 miles—is to follow a goldmine of footprints. The track has attracted the likes of Madonna and Bill Clinton.

## 6 Washington

### A Seattle Surprise

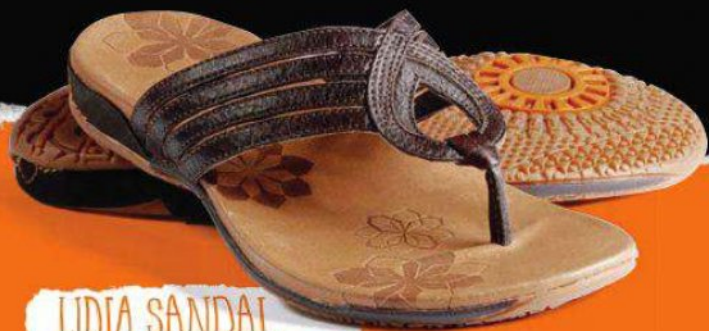
The skyline views at the top of 1.6-acre Kerry Park in Seattle strike a chord with fans of the sitcom *Frasier*. The Space Needle, Mount Rainier, Elliott Bay, downtown—it's all there before you, just as it was outside Dr. Frasier Crane's window. The tucked-away park on residential Queen Anne Hill (fabulous 19th-century architecture) never closes. Walk around at whim. A late dusk stroll—with the Space Needle all aglow—yields a big bright memory.



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The author's volcanic odyssey across Iceland's interior uncovers lessons on living with lava.

Story by JONATHAN B. TOURTELLOTT

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Locals divulge their favorite places in five classic neighborhoods, from the Upper East Side to Boerum Hill in Brooklyn (where Rae Cohen, left, runs Mile End deli).

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The view from Stay List-worthy Hotel Salto Chico is pure Patagonia. Photograph by Ben O'Bryan.



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A historic setting and organic fare earned Brazil's Hotel Villa Bahia a spot on our 2011 Stay List.

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# EYE ON THE FUTURE

WHY DOES A NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC ADVENTURER, PHOTOGRAPHER, AND CONSERVATIONIST **RISK IT ALL?**



**S**ebastian Copeland, Revo ambassador, set a world record kite skiing across Greenland, filmed his treacherous 400-mile trek to the North Pole ([intothecold.org](http://intothecold.org)), and takes on Antarctica next—all to show us global warming in the world's coldest corners.

"I was raised in cities, but early in life, I developed a taste for adventure and exploring the outdoors. I love venturing into remote places that are antagonistic to human life.

My childhood dream was to retrace the steps of the first expedition to the North Pole. In 2009 I did it, 400 miles on foot. That expedition brought global climate change home for me. I could trek in, but not out, because the ice was breaking up and melting so fast. I realized my

dream won't be possible for the next generation; too much ice will be gone.

Today I make exploring these polar landscapes my mission. More than anyplace else, they are the front lines of climate change. It lets me indulge my hunger for the extreme and use my photographs and films to share my passion—nothing communicates the problem better than a picture of melting ice.

Completely immersing into these challenging environments is humbling, but also empowering. It's a real privilege to experience places most people don't get to see—like visiting another planet. It's also a responsibility to bring back images that will help people fall in love with their world and be more inclined to save it."

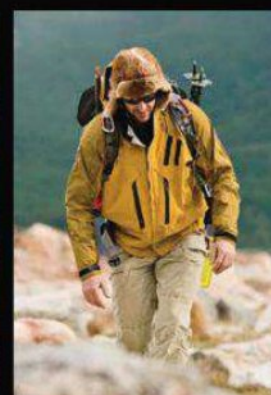
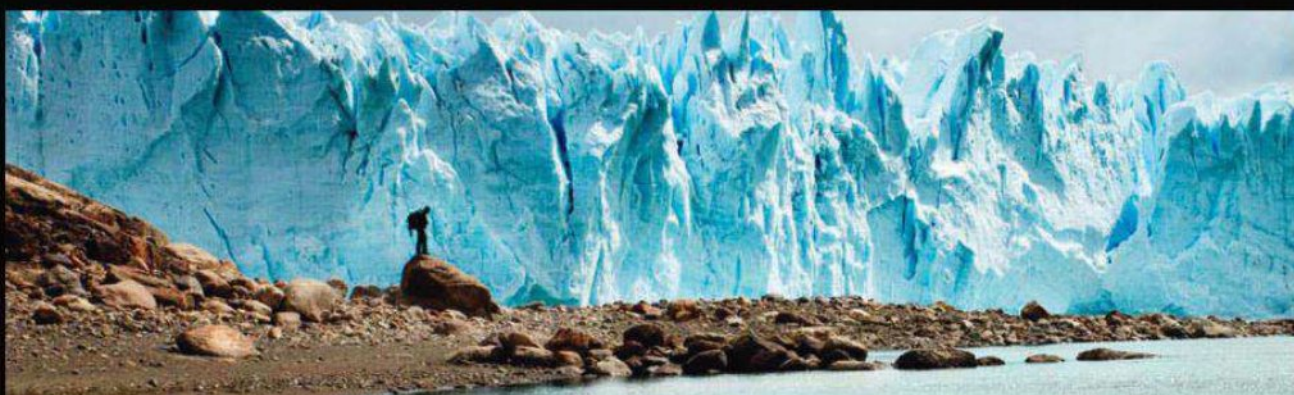
*Revo knows the right equipment is an adventure essential. The extreme clarity of Revo premium high-contrast polarized sunglasses makes it easier to see every possibility—an ability that reflects the essence of Sebastian Copeland's passion for our planet's future.*







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# TODAY, MY PERSPECTIVE SHIFTED

Sebastian Copeland has been intrigued by extreme polar regions like the North Pole, Greenland and Antarctica since he was a child. Today, they serve as his office, laboratory and stage in his relentless effort to call attention to accelerating climate change by documenting these remote but critical landscapes.

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## THE COLUMNS

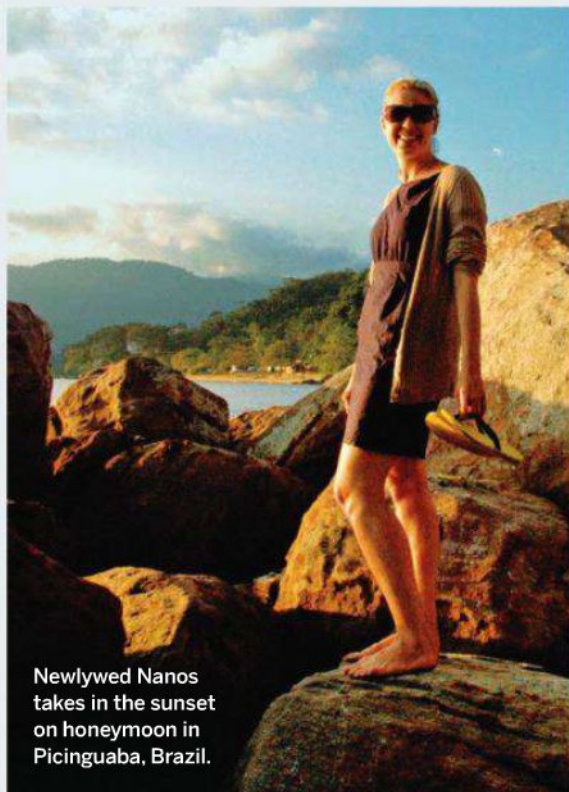
- 13 REAL TRAVEL** Want to powerfully capture the essence of a foreign land? Just inhale through your nose.
- 14 UNBOUND** Boyd Matson stays in the Tundra Buggy Lodge amid polar bears in Churchill, Manitoba.
- 18 ONE ON ONE** Editor Keith Bellows chats with outfitter Ralph Bousfield (*left*) about reinventing the African safari.
- 20 THE INSIDER** Christopher Elliott explores why more U.S. airports aren't accessible via mass transit.
- 24 TALES FROM THE FRONTIER** In Mongolia, local tour operators face off against international mining companies.

**“I can take you up** over the volcano! This is a unique opportunity in human history! We will fly down into the new ice canyon like a slalom. **”** —Life Atop a Cauldron, page 62

## BACKSTORY

### My Big Fat Brazilian Honeymoon

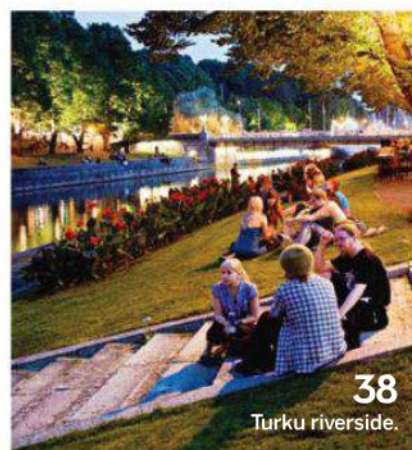
**D**uring my honeymoon on Brazil's Costa Verde last year, two of the places where my new husband and I stayed were such hidden gems that I had to share them once I got back to the office. *Traveler* contributing editor Daisann McLane ended up visiting both the Casa Turquesa in Parati and the pousada in Picinguaba as part of this year's "Stay List: Our Favorite Hotels in



Newlywed Nanos takes in the sunset on honeymoon in Picinguaba, Brazil.

South America" (page 52). The pressure to find the perfect post-wedding escape had hung heavy on my shoulders, until I realized that the idea of what constitutes romance isn't universal. Several days on a sailboat wouldn't float for my groom, who is prone to turn green when out at sea. And the thought of sipping mai tais all day left me bored. But our rich-in-culture Brazilian getaway turned out to be just what we were looking for. We watched Crayola-colored boats bob in a harbor, ate grilled fish at tiny beachside restaurants, and strolled the cobblestone streets, chatting with the locals who waved from their windows. It was our version of bliss. —Janelle Nanos, assistant editor

## DEPARTMENTS



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Wisconsin's Brule River State Forest.



**Experience** A dive with hundreds of sharks near Costa Rica's remote Cocos Island is a reminder that the ocean is a destination in itself. Page 47



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Art in Amsterdam.



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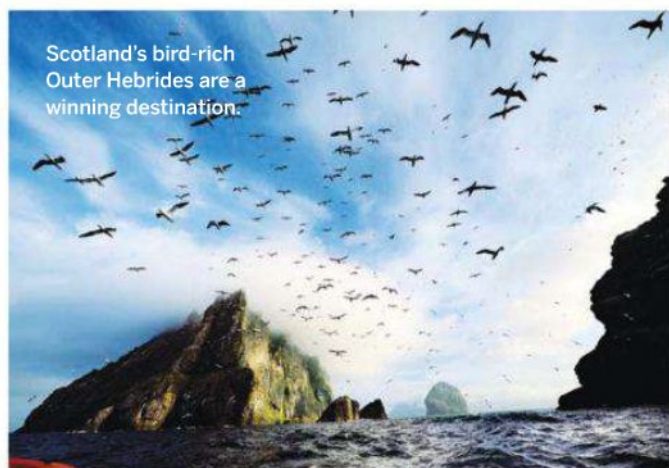
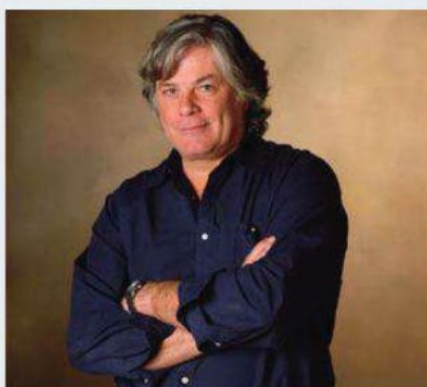


EDITOR'S NOTE

# The Future of Hotels

**O**ur annual “Stay List”—now in its fourth year—is one of those concepts that nails what it’s about: You want a great place to stay? You can’t do better than the ones we pick. Now, by “great” we don’t mean luxury or cool or iconic. We mean real and enduring and sustainably operated. “We also look for something a visitor would never see—community involvement,” says editor at large Sheila Buckmaster, who orchestrated our South America “Stay List” (on page 52 and online at <http://travel.nationalgeographic.com/travel/hotels/>). “If a place cares about the locals, that makes it a better place.” In some parts of the world such places are exceedingly hard to find. “But in South America,” says Buckmaster, “it was less difficult than we thought. Everywhere you turn you’re hit over the head with authenticity. You stay in real communities that have opened up to visitors. If you stay at an estancia, for instance, you are living and breathing the gaucho culture.”

This is a glimpse of where the lodging industry is headed—what we predicted when we launched the “Stay List.” We were tiring—and believed readers were, too—of cookie-cutter properties that could be anywhere from St. Louis to Saint-Tropez. What succeeds now are places that are honest, organic, and true to the local culture. I saw it recently at Norway’s Torvis Fjord Hotel, where I ate locally sourced wild salmon, deer shot by the hotel’s director, and crème brûlée with elderberry in a faithfully restored 1630s fjordside farmhouse filled with Romantic paintings and period furniture. I saw it in Quebec at Auberge de Montagne des Chic-Chocs. Picked by the *Guardian* as one of the world’s top ten eco-lodges, it blends in with the rustic landscape, eschews TV and in-room Internet in favor of eye-filling mountain views, and sits its guests at communal tables to encourage camaraderie. These are the kind of places we showcase, places that march to their own drummers. —Keith Bellows, Editor



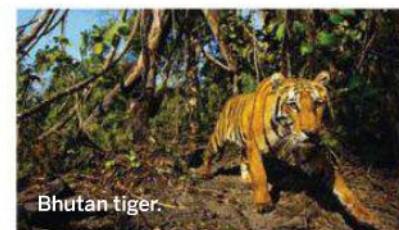
Scotland's bird-rich Outer Hebrides are a winning destination.

Enter the *Traveler Photo Contest* to win one of two great trips—including a 14-day expedition to Britain and Ireland—or other prizes. Find contest rules on page 92.

**Our Mission:** National Geographic Traveler reports on destinations of distinction and character, and we support efforts to keep them that way—believing that to enhance an authentic “sense of place” will benefit both travelers and the locations they visit. For more information, visit [travel.nationalgeographic.com/travel/sustainable](http://travel.nationalgeographic.com/travel/sustainable).



## NATGEO TRAVEL HIGHLIGHTS



Bhutan tiger.

### EXPEDITION WEEK

Set your DVRs now. On April 3, the National Geographic Channel kicks off its Expedition Week. Seven new shows will follow our explorers in the field, documenting their varied adventures: investigating Iceland’s volcanoes, uncovering the identity of Jack the Ripper, unearthing a pirate ship commissioned by Benjamin Franklin, and searching for cannibals in Papua New Guinea and lost tigers in Bhutan.

› [www.natgeotv.com](http://www.natgeotv.com)

### NEW BOOK

Lowell Thomas Award-winning travel writers Jane Wooldridge and Larry Bleiberg have assembled their collective wisdom in the book *The 100 Best Affordable Vacations*. With suggestions on finding deals and taking advantage of off-season travel, the pair have created low-cost itineraries for spa buffs, outdoor enthusiasts, and bibliophiles. It will be released by National Geographic Books on April 19.

› [www.ngbooks.com](http://www.ngbooks.com)

### INDIANA JONES EXHIBIT

The Montreal Science Centre’s new exhibit “Indiana Jones and the Adventure of Archaeology” blends the movie magic of the films with true-to-life archaeological escapades. On display will be artifacts on loan from the National Geographic Society and the Penn Museum, as well as memorabilia from the movies, including a faux Chachapoyan fertility idol from *Raiders of the Lost Ark* (right). The exhibit runs April 28 to September 18.

› [www.indianajonestheexhibition.com](http://www.indianajonestheexhibition.com)



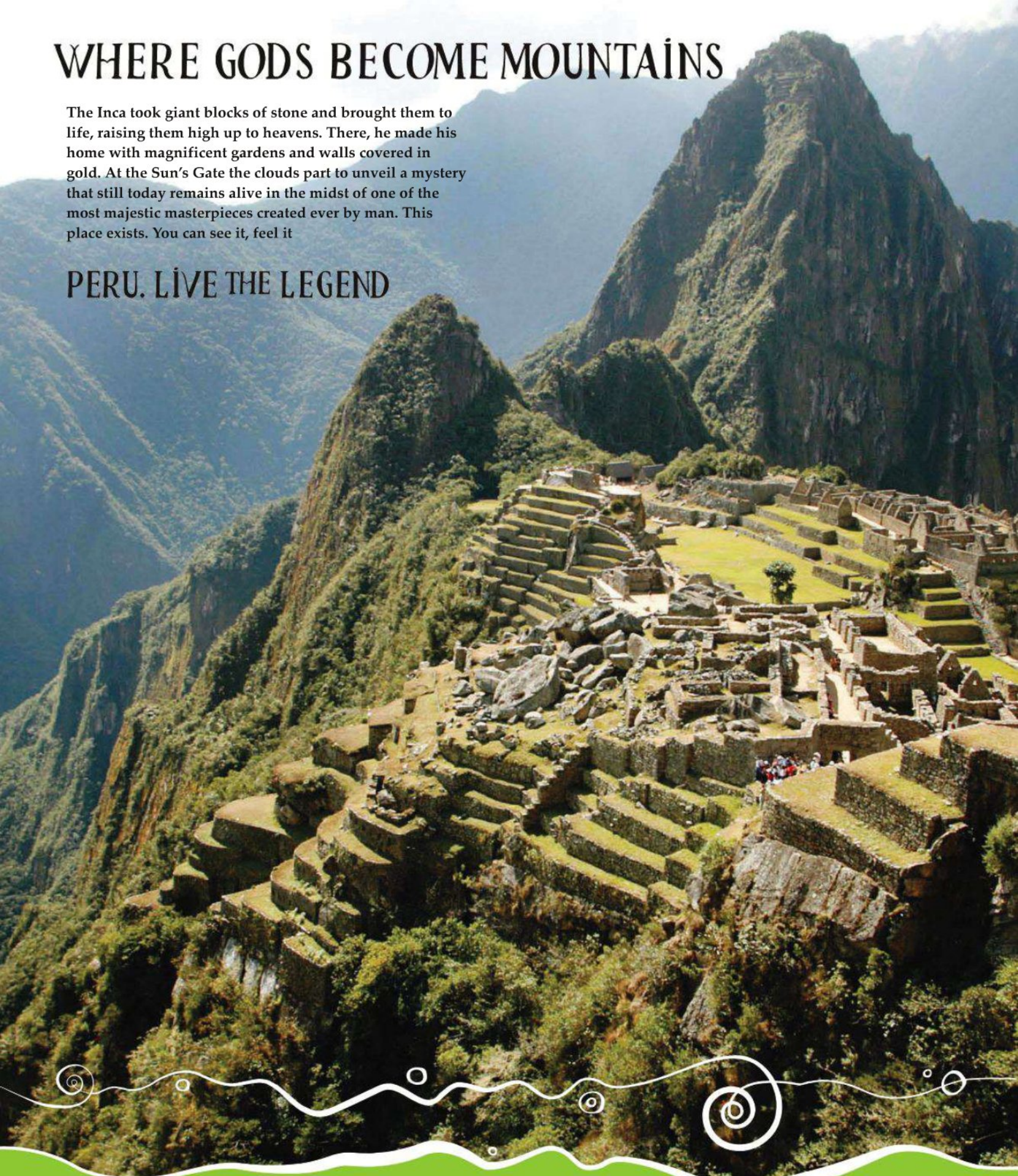
CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: MARK THIESSEN/NGS, STEVE WINTER/PANTHERA, LUCASFILM LTD., JIM RICHARDSON



# WHERE GODS BECOME MOUNTAINS

The Inca took giant blocks of stone and brought them to life, raising them high up to heavens. There, he made his home with magnificent gardens and walls covered in gold. At the Sun's Gate the clouds part to unveil a mystery that still today remains alive in the midst of one of the most majestic masterpieces created ever by man. This place exists. You can see it, feel it

## PERU. LIVE THE LEGEND



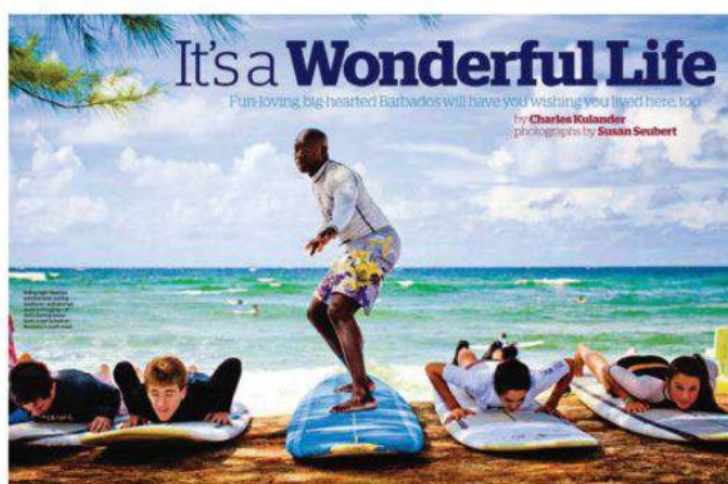
Machu Picchu is located 130 km (80 miles) from the city of Cusco.  
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## You're Too Kind

**I** CAN VOUCH for the hospitality of the people of Barbados ["It's a Wonderful Life," January-February 2011]," writes Andrew Horn of San Jose, California. "On my second day there, no sooner had I thought 'I'd really love a mango right now' than a Bajan man rode up on a bicycle near my hotel and kindly gave me a whole bag full of them. Later, at the marvelous Oistins Fish Fry, I had an incredible swordfish sandwich, and when I asked how much I owed, the booth's proprietress said, 'Nothing, my dear.'"



**Good Vibrations:** Kindness comes naturally to the people of Barbados.

When I replied, 'But that's so kind!' she said: 'This is normal here. I do this all the time.' As far as I'm concerned, Barbados's 'normal' is beautiful."

### Enjoying the View

"Christopher Elliott's piece about the distractions of electronic gadgetry for travelers [The Insider, January-February 2011] truly resonated with me," writes **Mark Wardlaw** of Santa Rosa, California. "On a recent trip to Europe, my wife and I realized we'd lost our camera and were almost paralyzed by distress. But after a few days, we began to experience unfettered and in-the-moment travel such as we'd never known. It was liberating to see new places

through our own eyes rather than through a camera lens. Instead of snapping away, we purchased postcards from favorite destinations, and later we discovered that friends and family prefer those to the hundreds of mostly mediocre photos that most travelers bring home. One afternoon, we lingered on a shady bench at the lovely Löwenplatz in Lucerne, Switzerland, and watched in amazement as one bus after another disgorged passengers who jostled for space, huddled for the obligatory and hasty photo opportunities. They then promptly returned to their buses without pausing even for a moment to absorb the spirit and essence of this famous landmark."



### COMMENT OF THE MONTH

**"I'm thrilled to have had my question answered with such knowledgeable advice. It was just what I needed to get my camping preparations in gear."**

—Kara L.P. on "Ask a Park Ranger: Acadia National Park," Nov-Dec 2010

### Ferry Crossing

"I was charmed by the article 'Boat Travel? Make Mine a Ferry,' by Daisann McLane [January-February 2011]," writes **Charlie Powell** of Bakersfield, California. "Having traveled on most of the ferryboats Ms. McLane writes of, I thought back to growing up in Anaheim, California, and my first ferry ride from Balboa Island to the Newport Beach peninsula. The short ride was beautiful and has probably

influenced my lifelong love for this form of transportation. In college, the trip became a rite of passage and a romantic, unique activity for a date. Balboa Island's classic main street filled with shops and frozen banana vendors was an inexpensive, yet somehow sophisticated way to impress someone. Later on in life my wife and I lived in Newport Beach, and the ferry was always an exciting end to a drive down the peninsula."

### THE ONLINE CHATTER

Our "In Praise of Snow" feature (January-February 2011) listed dozens of ways to celebrate winter. We asked readers what they loved most about the season.

"I enjoy winter in my village in the mountains of Poland, being nice and cozy cooking on my woodstove. It's also a great excuse to go skiing just across the valley from my home." ▶ **Eugene Markow**

"Eating roasted chestnuts on the streets of Paris." ▶ **Marcelo Marques**

"When it's over, I hate winter!" ▶ **Kenn Orphan**

"The great colors and clear skies at Grand Canyon, Monument Valley, Mesa Verde, and Arches National Parks." ▶ **Yleana Armas Maguhn**

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# Want Memories? Follow Your Nose.

Immediate and oh so powerful, local smells can capture the essence of a foreign land.

**M**Y FLIGHT LANDS in Tahiti's Papeete airport just before daybreak. "We'll be on the ground for an hour," the flight attendant tells me. Do I want to get out and stretch my legs? ¶ Of course I do—not because I feel particularly restless but because I've never before set foot in the South Pacific. It's only the airport, but still. This stopover on the way to Sydney is my first chance to experience a place I have always fantasized about. ¶ A cabin crew member opens the door, and I clamber down the steps to the

tarmac. At first all that I notice is the amethyst-hued dawn sky, in which the brightest southern stars still sparkle. And then it hits me: a moist breeze that stops me in mid-stride and blows away every other thought and sensation. Immediately I'm beamed to a beach by the ocean. I stand barefoot, garlanded in jasmine and plumeria blossoms, on a mound of juicy coconut flesh.

Perfume ads always try to convince us that their potions are intoxicating. The smell of Tahiti actually is. I began to calculate what the fallout would be if I got "lost" in the Tahiti airport and "missed" my flight.

The smells we encounter on the road probably rate as our most intense—and lingering—travel experiences, though we tend to disregard them. We venture forth and return home with collections of photos and stories, tales of fascinating encounters and new friendships. But ask someone to tell you about their trip to, oh, Tobago, and rarely will they lead with a description of the overpowering smells of the island, fragrances that remind you, at all times, that this is a land wreathed in the smoke of charred sugarcane. How many visitors to Spanish-speaking cities in the Caribbean mention the Agua de Florida cologne that seems to soak the very air inside buses or along crowded streets on a Saturday night? And while people love to describe their experiences eating Thai food, what about the rice, fried pork, shrimp, and lemongrass-lime aroma that is the eau de Thailand? In search of that ever elusive sense of place, we travelers often skip over the one quality that couldn't be more essential to it.

Smell is the outlier of our five senses, primal and powerful, but evanescent. The pleasant sensation that washes over me when I get a hit of the aroma of crusty bread wafting from a tiny bakery in Paris evaporates so quickly that I often become frustrated and



**Aromatherapy:** The powerful fragrance of incense marks a Hindu rite.

**Perfume ads always try to convince us that their potions are intoxicating. The smell of Tahiti, I find, actually is.**

feel again the heat of the ceremonial fires. That is the big difference between photographs and smells: One reminds you of where you've been, the other returns you there.

And what a return! Wherever I go, I try to find something that contains the smell of a place—a scarf washed in the flowery laundry powder of Laos or a sachet stuffed with the lavender that grows wild on the Mediterranean hillsides of the Croatian island of Hvar. Over the years these talismans, inevitably, lose their strength, yet even a tiny hint of those fragrances can move me through time and space.

My favorite travel writers understand how smell works. They draw attention not just to landscape and culture and history but to the more subtle signs—both pleasant and unpleasant—that let us know where we are. Ian Frazier, in his latest book, *Travels in Siberia*, describes the peculiarly Russian funk of tea bags, cucumber peels, wet cement, chilly air, and currant jam and concludes with the wonderful exclamation: "The smell of America says, 'Come in and buy.' The smell of Russia says, 'Ladies and gentlemen: Russia!'"

I know just what he means (although I have yet to inhale those soggy-tea-bag and cucumber-peel aromas

CONTINUED ON PAGE 16



# Ice Bears on the Edge

A visit to Churchill, Manitoba, almost always rewards you with a polar bear sighting in the wild.

**I**T WAS HALLOWEEN NIGHT. The doorbell rang. Opening the door, I let loose with my deepest, loudest, most ferocious growl. Six young costumed kids screamed, a brief flash of frightened uncertainty in their eyes. I was dressed as a giant polar bear, standing upright, menacingly waving my front paws at them. Although the bear suit looked real, kids in most towns would've thought, "What a cute costume." But then Churchill, Manitoba, Canada, where I was invited to help a local family celebrate Halloween, isn't most towns.

Churchill is billed as the "Polar Bear Capital of the World." Every year when the trick-or-treaters hit the streets, police officers armed with tranquilizer guns tag along to repel any bears that might have wandered into town looking for their own tasty treats. No wonder the kids I scared weren't quite sure what they were seeing.

It's been some 15 years since that Halloween night, and for the first time since then I'm back in Churchill, sans costume, hoping for my own face-to-face encounters with the great white bears.

Across the Arctic, polar bear numbers are in decline. If the climate continues to warm at the current rate, the bears could disappear completely in the next hundred years. But for now, if you visit Churchill in October or November, it's almost a sure thing you'll see a polar bear in the wild.

Churchill, population 914, sits on the edge of Hudson Bay at the point where the ice first forms every winter. And these bears love ice (thus their nickname, ice bears). Their affinity for frozen seas is simple: Ice means they can eat their favorite meal—seals. Although polar bears are powerful marine mammals, able to swim a hundred miles or more non-stop, they're too slow to catch a seal in open water. But when ice forms, they can walk out to a hole near where the seals are swimming, then sit and wait for a seal to pop its head up to breathe. Or as a bear might put it, "Dinner is served."

Without ice, the bears don't eat. So, after a summer of fasting, it's no surprise when these ravenous and normally solitary creatures congregate around Churchill, eager to be first out on the ice. Tourists also gather here every fall to take in the action, going out each day in tundra rovers to look for bears. A tundra rover is like a double-wide bus on five-foot-tall monster truck tires that can roll across the ponds, snow, marsh, and mud that dot the landscape



**Face-off:** Young bears tussle within easy camera shot at Churchill.

**Polar bears love ice because it helps them catch seals, their favorite food. Without ice, the bears don't eat.**

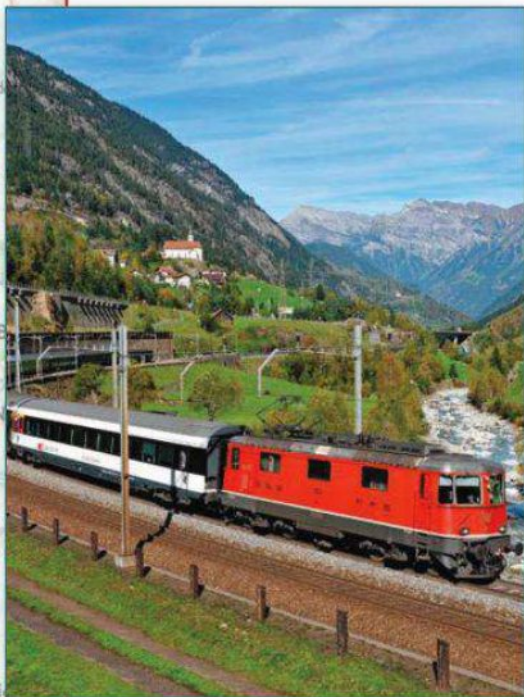
without getting stuck. The extra height also prevents an inquisitive bear from crawling in the window when it decides to stand upright against the side of the vehicle and check out the passengers.

Rather than ride around in the tundra rovers, though, I opt to stay put in the Tundra Buggy Lodge, hoping the bears will come visit me. The "lodge" is essentially six rovers hitched together like train cars, their interiors reconfigured with sleeping compartments, lounge, and dining car. It's basic but effective.

We're not here for the amenities but to see bears, and we do. Each day that I'm here, various bears show up for no particular reason, other than perhaps curiosity, and hang out for several hours. The young males also put on a show for us. They incessantly engage in wrestling matches or play fighting. It's a way of testing each other and establishing some early sense of a pecking order. Later, when they're out on the ice, and the battles are over food and females, the fighting will turn serious. But for now it's the stuff of great pictures. The only problem I'm having on this trip is trying to decide whether to shoot stills or video as I switch between cameras.

The whole experience is completely different from my earlier visit to Churchill. Back then I went out on the tundra with the late Malcolm Ramsay, one of the world's leading polar bear experts. As part of his research, he was monitoring the health of Churchill's polar bear population by darting some of the bears with a tranquilizer, which allowed him to safely do a hands-on examination, take blood samples, record detailed measurements, and tag each bear. One day we were flying in a helicopter when we spotted two big males hanging out together. The pilot brought us into position behind and to the left of the bears. Ramsay, like a modern day Buffalo Bill, rifle to his shoulder,





## Switzerland: Right on Track

The Swiss rail experience begins right at Geneva or Zürich airport, where trains depart every few minutes. A star among the scenic routes is the *Wilhelm Tell Express*—offering breathtaking views and fun travel by rail and boat. You start in Lucerne, aboard a historic paddle wheel steamer for a leisurely lunch cruise, then transfer to a panorama coach of the Gotthard Railway, which takes you south through stunning scenery to Locarno in Ticino—sunny, palm-tree-filled, Italian-speaking Switzerland. All this is easily done by traveling around the country with a Swiss Pass.

Rail Europe's Swiss Pass provides travel on all trains, buses, and boats throughout the country, as well as discounts on most mountain rail and cable cars and free entrance to more than 400 museums (some scenic routes require mandatory supplements for seat reservations and/or lunch). Passes range from four days to one month of consecutive travel or from three to six days of nonconsecutive (flexi) travel in a one-month period.



*"As a cartographer, I can ride the train and see the map of Switzerland come alive. You can travel just about anywhere in Switzerland by train. I love the span of landscapes that can be covered by rail in a single day. You can be in the high Alps at breakfast sipping hot chocolate and in a semitropical spot for tea or drinks in the afternoon. It's all so traveler-friendly."*

—Juan José Valdés, The Geographer, National Geographic Maps



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See an interactive map of Switzerland, produced by National Geographic Maps in partnership with Switzerland Tourism, at [MySwitzerland.com](http://MySwitzerland.com).

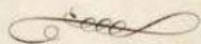


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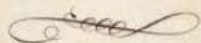
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leaned out the door, squinted through the scope, and fired a tranquilizer dart into the rump of the first bear. He quickly reloaded and darted the second bear, too.

We followed from the air as the bears began to stagger like a couple of drunks leaving a bar. When they fully succumbed to the drugs and lay down, we landed and got to work. First we checked for an identification number tattooed on the inside of their lower lip—and would've tattooed them if they didn't already have one. Next we pulled a nonessential tooth to count growth rings and determine age. I said to Ramsay: "These guys are like fraternity brothers who wake up with hangovers, tattoos, and some evidence suggesting they may have been in a fight but no memory of how any of it happened."

Rolling the sleeping beauties onto a small cargo net, we jacked them in the air under a tripod attached to a scale. After a summer of not eating, they weighed in at a svelte 757 and 767 pounds, respectively. A winter on the ice feasting on seals could push those numbers up another 400 to 800 pounds each.

Finally, as Ramsay and I knelt to measure one bear's skull, Ramsay pointed back to his research assistant and said: "You know Mark there is the world's foremost

expert in polar bear posteriors." I turned to see Mark with his arm inserted halfway up a polar bear's backside, collecting a stool sample, all in the name of science, of course. At that moment I said: "I've never wanted to be that much of an expert on anything." Then I wondered: Who is in second place, and are people really competing for that honor?

Today, standing outside on a deck at the Tundra Buggy Lodge with a couple of polar bears not more than 30 feet away, up on their back legs shoving each other like sumo wrestlers, I glance at the group of tourists taking pictures around me and, remembering back to my time with Ramsay, say to myself: "I'm glad you don't have to be a posterior expert or a bear researcher to appreciate these magnificent creatures."

I know it's important for scientists to do research and tell us when creatures are threatened with extinction and explain what needs to be done to save them. But it's only when the rest of us fall so in love with an animal that we'll spend our vacation traveling to the Arctic to take its picture that we can see hope for the polar bear's survival. ■

Contributing editor BOYD MATSON hosts *National Geographic Weekend* on radio.

## REAL TRAVEL

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 13

myself). Traveling years ago in Cuba, then in Hungary just after the fall of the Soviet Union, I noticed the strangest thing: The two places, thousands of miles apart, smelled almost the same, or at least their hotels did. It was the oddest odor, yet unmistakable: institutional, with a hint of old cafeteria food and strong disinfectant. Was this the smell of the Eastern Bloc?

Likewise, when I stayed in cheap motel chains while traveling on a budget in the United States, I noticed that no matter whether I was in Minnesota or Chicago or San Francisco, my room always had a vague petrochemical smell, like a new car. Blindfold me and put me in one of those rooms, and though I wouldn't be able to tell you which city I was in, I'd know with certainty that my hotel bill wasn't going to break the bank.

These particular travel smells represent the opposite of a Tahiti: a sense of no specific place, an anodyne landscape we encounter all too often these days. Over time we travelers become blasé about how our olfactory sense colors our travel experience. The travel industry, however, has

caught on. Increasingly, the real smells of life get crowded out by the "Come in and buy!" ones. Just-baked cookie aromas are pumped into airport lounges. Tony resorts extend their branding into the air—and our subconscious—by adding "corporate" fragrances to the climate-control systems.

Airlines eliminate scent entirely in their climate- and pressure-controlled cabins—something I appreciate, since I sometimes spend 18 hours shut up in them. This has another happy consequence: When you exit an airplane's no-smell zone, anything that hits your nostrils right after carries twice the impact.

Really, I was ready to ditch my flight from Tahiti to Sydney. But as I took one breath and then another, the lush opium of the island slowly turned to powder, like old perfume in the crook of an elbow. I knew then that it would stay with me. Just in case, I bought a box of coconut-oil soap and a bottle of plumeria perfume in one of the airport shops. I then reboarded the plane.

The smell of Australia awaited. ■

Contributing editor DAISANN McLANE sheds light on local ways in her blog, [www.therealtravelblog.com](http://www.therealtravelblog.com).



# JOURNEY TO THE ENDS OF THE EARTH

*without spending your means.*



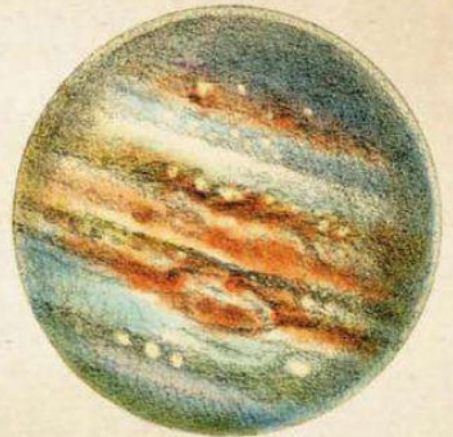
*Fig. 1 Saturn*



*Fig. 3 Asteroid Gaspra*



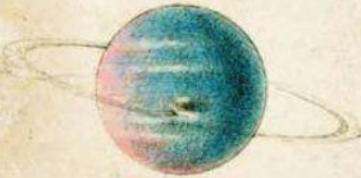
*Fig. 5 Mercury*



*Fig. 7 Jupiter*



*Fig. 6 Mars*



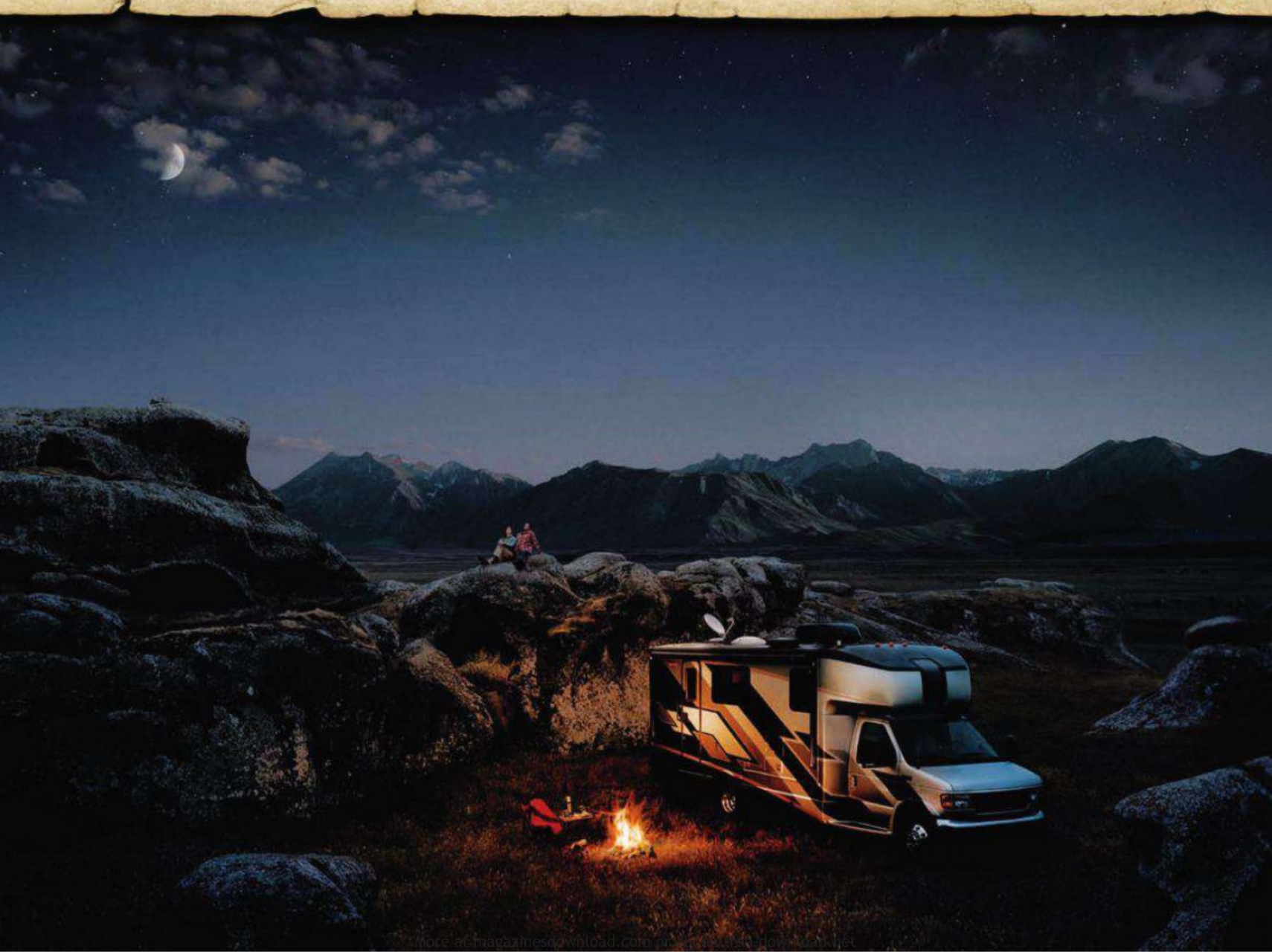
*Fig. 2 Neptune*



*Fig. 4 Phases of the Moon*

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# Reinventing the African Safari

Old-style opulence meets sustainability, and a new model of travel is born.

**I**N 1993, RALPH BOUSFIELD co-founded Uncharted Africa Safari Company, now billed as “one of the last truly traditional safari operations in Africa.” The company hosts visitors at various classically styled camps in Botswana’s Kalahari Desert, where they can witness migrating wildebeest, watch playful meerkats, and listen to the cry of the hyena. Guests visit ancient baobab trees and venture out onto the dusty Makgadikgadi salt pan, the remnant of a once great lake. Bousfield takes his inspiration from his late father, Jack Bousfield, who was an adventurer and hunter. Today’s safaris, however, eschew guns for cameras and make cultural interactions—with local Bushmen, for example—an important part of the experience.

**Your father came from an era that some Africans aren’t particularly proud of. How has your approach to the business changed?**

Obviously we’re products of history, but we’ve learned so much since my father’s day. We’ve learned about the costs our actions have to the environment. We’ve learned to appreciate the role of wildlife, their movements and migrations. As a company, we try to stay cutting edge, to offer every sort of luxury but also a very personal experience involving wildlife, local people, and experts.

**What sort of experiences do visitors have meeting the Bushmen?**

You’ll experience an enormous collective knowledge of 35,000-plus years, getting an idea of how all of us lived until about 10,000 years ago—as hunter-gatherers. With the men, you’ll experience the making of bows and arrows, tracking, traditional hunting, and the manufacture of medicines from plants and herbs. With the women, you’ll experience collecting and preparing plants—they use about 120

## RALPH BOUSFIELD

### SAFARI OUTFITTER

Ralph Bousfield grew up in the African bush, the son of an adventurer whose idea it was to bring travelers to the Makgadikgadi salt pan of Botswana. Bousfield studied nature conservation in Pretoria. He co-founded a safari company based on his father’s vision after the elder Bousfield died in an airplane crash.

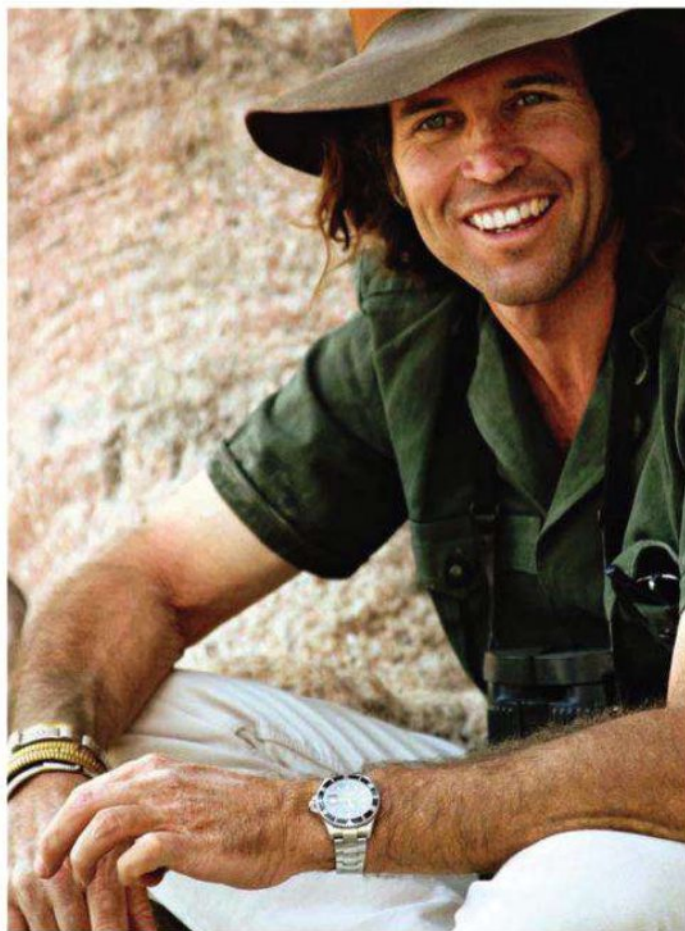
different species—the making of ostrich eggshell beads and jewelry, and the tanning of skins using roots. Probably most important to our visitors is the spiritual element: seeing how these people are absolutely passionately connected to the land and how, through their shamans and healers, they are connected to the spirit world. On the safaris, you spend time with the shamans and watch them do trance dances. It’s a very personal, intimate experience. They’ll ask you to participate in some of the ceremonies they do. It’s not just a “get naked and dance for the tourist” kind of thing. It really provides a proper understanding of what’s going on in their culture. It’s a very rare and authentic experience.

**Tell us a bit about your use of helicopters on tours.**

The helicopter is the latest means of exploring, getting you to places you otherwise simply cannot go. Accessing these areas actually benefits them, because we bring money and attention to places that would be too marginal for us to operate in using trucks. Some people say: “I bet helicopters use lots of fuel.” Actually, they leave a smaller carbon footprint than a big convoy of vehicles would, not to mention avoiding having to build bridges and all that to get the vehicles there. With helicopters you can just hop in. In 2010 we did helicopter trips in the Kalahari, accessing areas with rock art. The previous year we went into northern Uganda, viewing various highland species of wildlife.

**Are you optimistic that indigenous communities can preserve their ancient cultures?**

That’s enormously important, but the preservation takes different forms. Here in Botswana, everybody has to go to school by law, even



**A new view:** Bousfield says tourism can help sustain traditional culture.

DAVID ROSS/UNCHARTED AFRICA SAFARI COMPANY

CONTINUED ON PAGE 22





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# Slow Progress For Rapid Transit

Getting to the airport by bus or train can be a bad trip.

**I**T'S A HALF-HOUR DRIVE by car from my house to the airport. But the bus ride? That's an odyssey. ¶ Here's what I'd be up against if I wanted to save the \$10-a-day parking fee and catch the city bus from Winter Springs, Florida, to Orlando International Airport: Depending on the time of day, I'd have to walk from one to five miles, catch a bus, make at least one connection, and walk another half mile. ¶ Total time for the 28-mile journey: two and a half to three hours. ¶ Chances are, you've run the numbers on a greener,

cheaper trip to the airport by mass transit and come to a similar conclusion—forget the bus or train; it's easier to drive.

It shouldn't be that way. Many major airports are pathetically underserved by public transportation, offering no light-rail or subway connection or perhaps only city buses that take forever to get to or from downtown. The most striking example of this failure is Las Vegas, where you can literally see the beleaguered monorail from downtown dead-end across the street from the airport.

The problem needs to be addressed nationwide. The pat excuses for our rapid transit deficiencies must be reexamined. We need to reallocate resources and maybe write some big checks.

Getting to the airport is already a joke in some of America's biggest cities. Have you tried driving from Manhattan to JFK or from the Los Angeles suburbs to LAX recently? I have. It's almost impossible to avoid a traffic jam on New York's Van Wyck Expressway or L.A.'s 405. What are the public transportation options? Well, there's the AirTrain to JFK, which is sometimes criticized for being inconvenient (lots of transfers) and dicey (in places, especially after hours). But hey, at least there's a train. In L.A. the bus is pretty much your only public transit choice.

So why is the U.S. mass-transit impaired? "It's a lifestyle choice," says Michael Bell, a professor of policy studies at Georgia State University in Atlanta and an expert on airport mass transit. American air travelers like the freedom of having their own car and the convenience of bringing lots of luggage.

I beg to differ with the good professor: You'd be attached to your car, too, if there were no better way to get where you're going. We often have no real choice, which is heading us down the wrong road.

There's another explanation for the failure: The lack of will by



**End of the line:** The Las Vegas monorail ends just short of the airport.

**While passengers may love a zippy train to their terminals, airports have an incentive to promote driving.**

shortsighted politicians focused on the financial bottom line. "Most public transportation systems earn only about one-third of their operating expenses from passengers," says Lawrence Hughes, a New York-based transportation policy expert. "The other two-thirds is typically paid for by taxpayers." Perennially in campaign mode, politicians understandably hesitate to spend money on unprofitable mass-transit projects whose benefits may not be felt for years.

And here's an interesting side note: Income from parking and car rentals at U.S. airports accounts for about 63 percent of non-aeronautical revenues. So while passengers may love a zippy train to their terminals, airports have an incentive to promote driving—and parking.

The government is beginning to acknowledge the problem. Consider the Transportation Department's \$79-billion budget this year, which includes \$1 billion for high-speed rail projects on top of the \$9 billion it received in 2010. Some airports are moving in the right direction, too. Seattle and Vancouver recently added airport trains; Washington, D.C., plans to run a new Metro line to Dulles Airport; and Phoenix plans a \$1.1-billion light-rail connection to its airport.

But it's not nearly enough. Mass transit—not just to the airport but all public transportation—typically remains an afterthought in Washington, despite the rhetoric and the promising new projects. Of the 18.4-cents-per-gallon federal tax on gasoline, only about 2.86 cents are allocated specifically to mass-transit projects. The bulk of the money pays for roads and bridges, which primarily benefit drivers. And therein lies the rub.

"The trip to the airport in most big cities is symptomatic of broader trends in the U.S.," says Jen Henry, a mass-transit expert at the Natural Resources Defense Council, an environmental





# A vacation isn't an Irish vacation without a detour or two.

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group. “We have invested the vast majority of our transportation infrastructure dollars in roads and highways, whereas Europe has had a more balanced approach.”

I know, I know: Many Americans recoil at suggestions of European solutions, so I’ll spare you the paeans to the speedy, seamless, sparkling trains I took to the airport when I lived in Frankfurt and Vienna (though they were convenient and cheap).

Instead, let’s take a page from our own history. Walk through the California State Railroad Museum in Sacramento to see how Americans traveled before they had cars. You might catch a glimpse of our own future. For example, Los Angeles was connected by a first-rate network of trains and trolleys, which connected to a far-reaching rail system. Many other American cities also had reliable, quick train service before there were airports to get to.

Market forces alone didn’t forge this rail network. The government offered loans and land grants, foreseeing the economic upside of having a dependable transportation infrastructure. And, just as it was in the mid-19th century, the solution today needs to be a comprehensive, public-private partnership, say experts. Everyone has to be in on it, from passengers to

politicians to urban planners. “We now understand the limits of automotive culture,” says Peter Hansen, editor of the journal *Railroad History*. “We recognize that it’s not sustainable.” Cities of the future need to become dense “nodes” of mixed-use urban areas that can be easily connected to airports, as opposed to the sprawling suburbs of the 20th century. The stakes are now even higher. The benefits aren’t just to the economy; they’re also environmental.

Imagine reaching the airport from downtown in ten minutes by train, at a fraction of the cost of a cab, car, or airport shuttle. Imagine rediscovering the pleasure of driving, revving up the car only for Sunday drives in the country rather than ghastly commutes into the city.

I’m optimistic. As I write this, the first phase of Florida’s new high-speed rail from Tampa to Orlando is under way. The train will terminate at the airport, but unfortunately for me, it doesn’t go far enough. Extending the line to the northern suburbs where I live is still just a plan.

For now, at least, I’ll continue driving. ■

Contributing editor CHRISTOPHER ELLIOTT also addresses readers’ travel problems. E-mail him your story at [elliott@ngs.org](mailto:elliott@ngs.org).

## ONE ON ONE

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 18

the traditional cultures, and I think that’s good. Some people, taking a romantic Western perspective, want to see the locals in a sort of arrested development, living in a traditional way like they were an exhibit in a museum. That attitude, though it gives a nice feeling in the short term, is unsustainable. What does get sustained—in terms of the skills and knowledge of a culture—is whatever the world assigns value to. If people look down on someone who lives as a hunter-gatherer, saying, in effect, “You’re close to being an animal,” then the communities will not want to continue that lifestyle. On the other hand, the work we do as safari outfitters gives value to the traditional ways of living—and the traditional knowledge of botany and wildlife, for example. Our work helps preserve the old ways, saying to the Bushmen: “Your knowledge is worth something.” I was discussing our safaris with some Bushmen, and a few of the guys said to me: “We would like to do exactly what you do.” I said: “What do you think I do?” And they said: “We know what you do. You use the knowledge that you inherited from your father. People pay you to do what he taught you. We want

to do the same thing with what we know.” I said something like: “You’re so right! You’re right on the money.” And, indeed, the guys were totally getting it. Rather than just looking into the past, they were looking to the future and finding a way to mutually benefit.

## Do you retreat into nature to de-stress, to recharge?

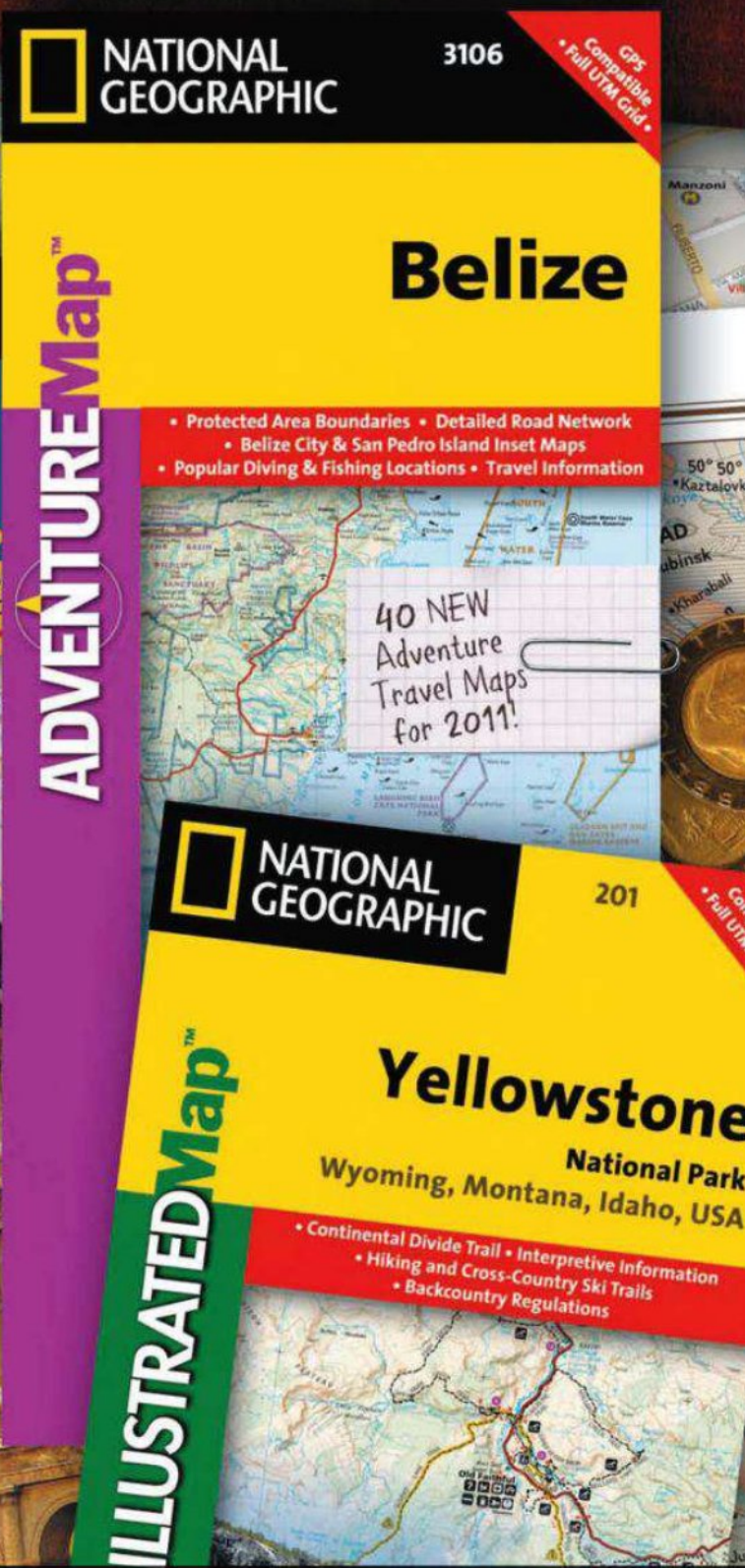
Yes. We live in the Kalahari, among big, wide-open spaces. It’s a huge environment that puts things into perspective. You feel quite insignificant, not in a negative way but just in how we can sometimes take ourselves too seriously and get caught up in the little day-to-day irritations. I’ve been driving since six o’clock this morning, moving through herds of thousands of wildebeest and springbok and oryx. Being out in raw nature is like meditating, almost as though you are achieving a different state of consciousness. And if I’m having a hard time, I just go for a long walk into that environment. The farther you walk, the smaller you become, and the more insignificant your problems. I always come back from these walks thinking: “Okay, I’m ready to take on the next challenge.” ■

KEITH BELLOWS is the editor of *Traveler*.





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# Epic Mongol Battle

Eagles and yurt hotels are the weapons of choice in this conflict.

I'M ONLINE researching a story and stumble upon a familiar name. I pick up the phone and call Jalsa Urubshurow, a childhood playmate from my hometown of Howell Township, New Jersey. It's been 30 years, and yet within minutes we have renewed our friendship forged traipsing through the pine barrens at the edge of our rural neighborhood. Impulsively, we hatch a plan to meet on the border of China and Mongolia the following spring. He wants to show me what is at stake in his ancestral homeland as it shakes off

a wicked hangover from Stalin-era communist rule. "Mongolia in real life is the adventure we always dreamed about as kids," he says.

Though our heads are flecked with gray, we recognize each other when we meet in the sand-blown border town of Erenhot. After my jacket is stolen by a rogue taxi driver, Jalsa flags down a motorcycle and races after the thief before I can even ask him what he's doing. He soon returns, laughing, jacket in hand: "It's the wild frontier."

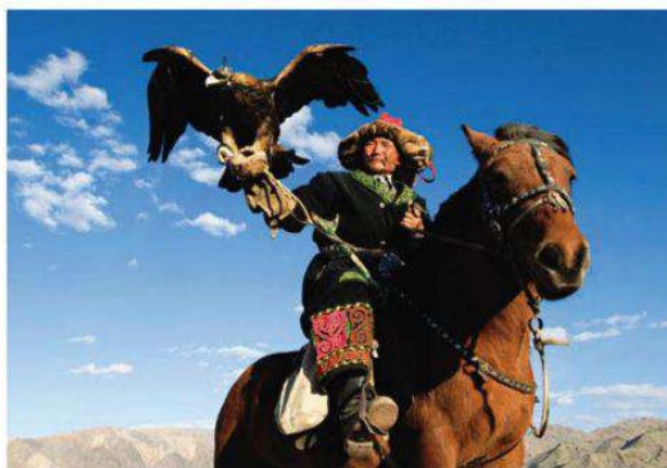
A sparsely populated country more than twice the size of Texas that looks to the Dalai Lama for spiritual leadership, Mongolia remains mostly a land of yurts (known as *gers*) and nomadic herders who travel on horseback across the largest unfenced grasslands in the world. Even the capital city of Ulaanbaatar, which has sprouted new designer stores such as Vuitton, Armani, and Boss, remains circled by thousands of handcrafted gers made of canvas and wool felt.

But it's what lies outside the capital and beneath the grasslands that has compelled multinational mining corporations to rip up land and pollute rivers.

"Mongolia is on the cusp of a development tsunami. There is hardly an international mining company that is not prospecting here," says Jalsa as our 4x4 kicks up red dust across the Gobi. We are retracing the route taken by American explorer Roy Chapman Andrews, who discovered the world's first nest of fossilized dinosaur eggs here in the 1920s.

Jalsa, the charismatic founder and president of Nomadic Expeditions, a pioneering Mongolia-based outfitter, offers a sustainable alternative to wholesale mining of coal, copper, and gold. He sells guided trips that explore Mongolia's natural and cultural heritage.

The Gobi is not the stark dunescape I imagined but is blanketed in *taana*—a wild onion that is a food source for pastoralists' herds.



Bird's-eye view: Participants at Mongolia's Golden Eagle Festival.

**The Gobi is not the stark dunescape I imagined but is blanketed in *taana*—a wild onion that is an important food source.**

at construction sites to starting what became one of the leading carpentry framing firms in the U.S. His American-style success story made him a well-known figure in the tight-knit Mongolian-American community. When a government delegation visited the U.S. in 1990, Jalsa met Dashiin Byambasuren, who would become Mongolia's prime minister three months later. The prime minister asked Jalsa to help his ancestral country develop tourism.

The builder accepted. He visited Mongolia for the first time and started putting the country on the global tourism map—initially with Three Camel Lodge and later by founding the Golden Eagle Festival, an annual October event designed to preserve the age-old tradition of hunting on horseback with eagles. Now in its 12th year, the festival draws travelers from around the world who come to watch the nomadic hunters release their eagles from a high cliff in feats of speed and agility. The entire event has the feel of a giant Mongolian country fair, including music, dance, and horse-riding games. Travelers, led by local guides from Nomadic Expeditions and other outfitters, learn about traditional culture firsthand and see the raptors up close.

Now Jalsa faces a more formidable challenge—how to stop

We are headed to Three Camel Lodge, Mongolia's first community-based eco-lodge, built by Jalsa together with local craftsmen following Mongolian design and using indigenous materials, such as unprocessed desert stones and handmade roof tiles. Its 20 rooms buck five-star luxury in favor of comfortable authenticity (nightly rates start at \$220 for two, including meals).

On the balcony overlooking an eye-squintingly bright vista of the Gobi, Jalsa explains how, in the three decades since we last met, he went from pounding nails





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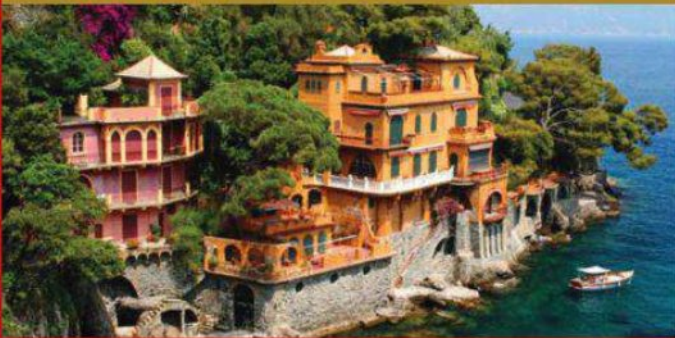
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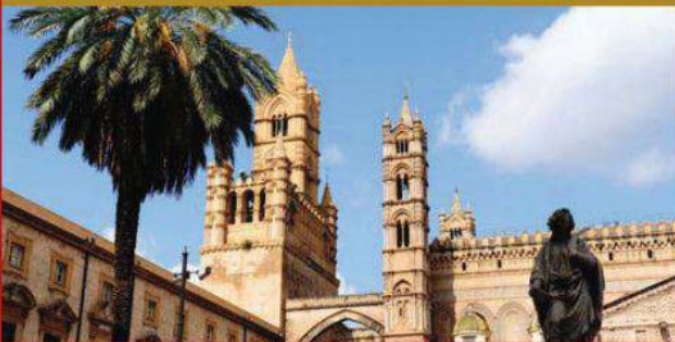
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uncontrolled mining from trashing Mongolia's wilderness. From the Gobi, we head north to Lake Hovsgol, an 85-mile-long body of fresh water considered to be among the purest on the planet. As we bounce on kidney-jolting roads to the Russian border, the Gobi gives way to open grasslands, which meld into rolling hills that turn into taiga forests before reaching a region of icy clear streams and snow-covered mountains. Beyond that: Siberia. I have seen fewer than a hundred people during five days of travel—often just two or three at a time, mostly on horseback. We do pass a handful of vehicles, some shiny and new. Mining speculators, says Jalsa.

"The only way to stop them is to demonstrate that tourism can bring in good money on a sustainable basis for future generations while also protecting the land that Mongolians consider sacred," he notes.

This might be just wishful thinking if it were without precedent. But in 1987, white-water rafting outfitters in western Canada took a similar approach against plans to turn the Tatshenshini-Alsek river watershed into the largest copper mine in the world. The government eventually rescinded the mining permit and created a 2.4-million-acre protected area that's now a popular eco-adventure destination.

Mongolia—a mostly poor, developing country—could prove a much tougher challenge. But Jalsa is not alone in his quest, as more Mongolians recognize the threat to their land and way of life. One of them is Tsetsegee Munkhbayar, a former yak herder who won the Goldman Environmental Prize in 2007 for leading a grassroots movement that successfully shut down 35 mining operations and continues working to improve and enforce mining regulations. "With the combined voices of local people and travelers, we can have a stronger economic argument to stop mining," says Munkhbayar.

Back on the road, we pass a succession of blue prayer flags tied to piles of rocks and trees. Jalsa stops the Land Cruiser to circle these spiritual shrines three times on foot. Locals believe the custom brings good luck to travelers. The Jersey boy who always wanted to play Mongolian war battles is now fighting to defend his homeland with festivals and eco-lodges. I tell him this is going to be a tough battle to win. "That's what they told Genghis Khan," he says. ■

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# SMART TRAVELER

[ TRAVEL AT ITS BEST ]



**Blue v. Gray:** The Bloody Angle battle is reenacted in Virginia. Below: Fort Sumter after capture by the Confederates.

## Back to the Battlefields

The war that divided a nation sets feet marching once more. | By **ANDREW NELSON**

**U**GLY HISTORY CAN be honored in pretty places. The cannonballs flying over the tidal marshes and promenades ringing Charleston Harbor 150 years ago this April ushered in the bloody, brutal clash called the American Civil War. This spring both Charleston, S.C., home of Fort Sumter, and Washington, D.C., where Lincoln both ruled and rallied the Union, are sounding a reveille that marks the start of a four-year-long series of commemorations unfolding across the country but focused primarily in the states where the fighting occurred. Even Hollywood is getting into the act. Steven Spielberg is directing

a Lincoln biopic in time for the 150th anniversary of the Gettysburg Address in 2013. The movie, starring Daniel Day-Lewis as Honest Abe, is based on the book *Team of Rivals* about the president and his bickering Cabinet.

The Civil War needs no cinematic special effects to dramatize its sweep. Americans have participated in 12 major conflicts, including two world wars; but the War Between the States remains the nation's costliest. Of the some three million Americans who fought, more than 600,000 died. "It truly was the outstanding event in American history insofar as making us what we are," said Shelby Foote, the late





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### SMART TRAVELER

Civil War historian. The Civil War left rifts that have never quite closed, case in point—the ongoing debate over why Southern states seceded from the Union. Some battles between the Blue and Gray are still being fought today—a reason that many of the commemorations are low-key affairs. The scars are evident a century and a half later.

Despite some official ambivalence, over the next four years, ordinary travelers will mobilize, visiting battlefields, monuments, and museums. With hundreds of Civil War sites, Virginia, for example, is angling to attract history and heritage travelers. “We want visitors to experience our stories about the Civil War and Emancipation,” said Alisa Bailey of the Virginia Tourism Corporation, a group tasked with the delicate job of marketing the former Confederate state in a way that both honors Virginia soldiers while acknowledging the mistakes of a slave-owning past. In a strapped economy, the Old Dominion and other states clearly hope for a victory marked by crowded restaurants, hotels, and campgrounds while the invading hordes are touched by the history played out here. Below, a look at events in the war’s first bellicose cities.

**WASHINGTON, D.C.** When President-elect Lincoln arrived in Washington in 1861, the town’s muddy streets and half-built Capitol dome bore no resemblance to the marble-clad metropolis we see today. Despite the transformation, you can still get a sense of the great conflict. Tour **Arlington House**, home of Confederate Gen. Robert E. Lee (the mansion’s grounds became Arlington National Cemetery); **Cedar Hill**,



**War wounds:** The sesquicentennial offers the opportunity for visitors to reexamine the battle scars of a nation, including those at Gettysburg, Pennsylvania (above and below).

home to the former runaway slave turned abolitionist Frederick Douglass; and **Ford's Theatre**, where John Wilkes Booth shot Lincoln. (Surratt Boarding House, where Booth and his conspirators plotted the assassination, is now a Chinatown restaurant called Wok & Roll.) As the Union capital, Washington bubbled with intrigue and espionage. Visitors to the **International Spy Museum** will learn that some of the most skilled were women, including Belle Boyd, the “Cleopatra of the Secession.” Guests can still check in to the opulent **Willard InterContinental** hotel, as Lincoln did before his first inauguration. (A copy of his bill—for \$773.75—is on display in the lobby’s History Gallery.) At the



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## [ CIVIL WAR BATTLE PLAN ]

## TOURING A HOUSE DIVIDED

A sampling of sesquicentennial events and locales around the country.

Civil War observations will continue over the next four years, and plans remain incomplete. For lists of commemorations, see [www.civilwar.org/150th-anniversary](http://www.civilwar.org/150th-anniversary), run by the Civil War Trust, which also maintains links to many state sites, and the National Park Service's regularly updated website at [www.nps.gov/civilwar](http://www.nps.gov/civilwar).

**THE MUSEUM OF THE CONFEDERACY** > Richmond, Va. Holding the world's largest collection of Confederate artifacts, the Virginia institution located in the former Confederate capital has mounted "The War Comes Home," a springtime exhibit depicting life in the Confederate States of America, or CSA. Items include mourning dresses, slave-made products, and smuggling dolls—toys filled with contraband that passed through the Union's sea blockade. Other attractions include walking tours of antebellum neighborhoods and the Confederate White House, home to President Jefferson Davis.

**NATIONAL UNDERGROUND RAILROAD FREEDOM CENTER** > Cincinnati, Ohio In April, the center will highlight the exploits of Cincinnati's "Black Brigade," who valiantly defended the Union city during the 1862 siege. The museum explores and documents the evils of slavery and honors the Americans who threw off their chains and escaped to freedom north of the Ohio River. This year, Juneteenth celebrations feature Civil War reenactors and period games. In August, the center will kick off self-guided walking and driving tours that highlight nearby stops on the Underground Railroad.



**MARGARET MITCHELL HOUSE** > Atlanta, Ga. In May, Atlanta observes the 75th anniversary of the Pulitzer Prize-winning novel set during the Civil War with a variety of public programs unfolding in the Tudor Revival-style building where Margaret Mitchell penned the memorable tale of the fiery Scarlett O'Hara and dashing Rhett Butler. Also on the premises: a *Gone with the Wind* shop featuring dolls, figurines, books, and other collectibles that prove fans, frankly, still give a damn for the epic tale of the Old South.

**MANASSAS NATIONAL BATTLEFIELD PARK** > Manassas, Va. On July 21, politicians and dignitaries gather to observe the 150th anniversary of the Battle of First Manassas (the South's name for the first battle of Bull Run). The site of the South's first big military victory over the North, the battle with its many casualties caused both sides to realize this would be a long and brutal fight. Expect historic weapons demonstrations, combat reenactments, musical performances, and special tours and lectures scheduled throughout the summer.

**SHRIVER HOUSE** > Gettysburg, Pa. The epic three-day battle at Gettysburg in 1863 marked the beginning of the end for the Confederacy, and the town of Gettysburg will host a series of events over the next five years. A contrast to the killing fields is a candlelit Christmas tour in December of the Shriver House Museum, the home of a civilian family; visitors discover how Yuletide was celebrated in the 1860s.

**SHILOH NATIONAL MILITARY PARK** > Shiloh, Tenn. From March 31 to April 2, 2012, Civil War reenactors plan to re-create the searing battle on private land adjacent to the military park in southwestern Tennessee. It will feature a cast of more than 10,000. The park itself will debut a new film and present in-depth, ranger-led tours that walk visitors through the actual battle site.

Poster from the 1939 film *Gone with the Wind* (above). Confederate Gen. John Bell Hood's coat at the Museum of the Confederacy (right).



The Petersen House, in Washington, D.C.

**Smithsonian National Museum of American History**, "Abraham Lincoln: An Extraordinary Life" features artifacts such as the iron wedge he used to split his wood rails and the top hat he wore the night he died. Other exhibits will focus on the war itself; the **Smithsonian American Art Museum** exhibit "Civil War and American Art" demonstrates how artists such as Frederic Church and Winslow Homer depicted the war. For more, visit the website [washington.org/civil-war/home](http://www.washington.org/civil-war/home).

**CHARLESTON, SOUTH CAROLINA** The city commemorates the anniversary of the war's opening shots at **Fort Sumter National Monument** with both hoopla and somber observation on April 12. The National Park Service features tours, living history demonstrations, and programs at the island fortress. Nearby **Fort Moultrie** tells the war's story from the Union, Confederate, and African-American perspectives. In town, the **Gibbes Museum of Art** features 33 paintings by Conrad Wise Chapman depicting wartime Charleston. The very fabric of the conflict is on display at the **Charleston Museum** in "Threads of War: Clothing and Textiles of the Civil War." Kids will enjoy the model of the Confederate submarine *H.L. Hunley* outside the building. The real *Hunley* is in north Charleston at the **Warren Lasch Conservation Center**. The sub, found in 1995 and raised in 2000, is being restored; tours are available on weekends and select days. Open anytime is **The Battery**, Charleston's famed promenade lined with antebellum homes and featuring an expansive view of the harbor. Confederate Gen. P. G. T. Beauregard watched the bombardment of Fort Sumter from the veranda of the **Edmondston-Alston House**. Today tours take visitors through its lavishly appointed rooms to rediscover the Southern aristocracy the war swept away. Any trip to the Deep South should include a taste of mint julep, such as the one served at the elegant brasserie **39 Rue de Jean**. For more, visit [www.sccivilwar.org](http://www.sccivilwar.org). ■

JONATHAN ERNST/REUTERS (UPPER LEFT), AP ARCHIVE/ALAMY (LEFT), KATHERINE WETZEL/MUSEUM OF THE CONFEDERACY (RIGHT)



# Europe's Greatest Hits

The Continent celebrates summer. | By STEVE KNOPPER

In 12th-century Germany, minstrels showed up at castles and town squares to perform love songs for kings and commoners. Today, Europe fills with music festivals starring the likes of Sir André Previn, Willie Nelson, and Snoop Dogg. The best of these multiday lollapaloozas are set near mountains, lakes, and stately buildings.

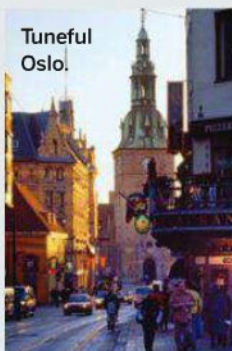
**1 GLASTONBURY, SOMERSET, ENGLAND** > Set on a 900-acre farm in the village of Pilton, Glastonbury is England's annual Woodstock; it began in 1970 the day after Jimi Hendrix died. Some 150,000 fans populate a tent city to see the likes of Stevie Wonder, Norah Jones, and hundreds of rock bands. (\$310 for entire festival, June 22–26)

**2 MONTREUX JAZZ FESTIVAL, SWITZERLAND** > With the Alps as backdrop, and near Lake Geneva, this summer fixture puts some of the biggest names in jazz and not-exactly-jazz (from Miles Davis and George Benson to Prince) on stages in parks and clubs. (free to about \$315 per event, July 1–16)

**3 FÊTE DE LA MUSIQUE, PARIS, FRANCE** > Focused on Paris, where it began 30 years ago and continues to fill museums, train stations, and the streets with (sometimes unexpected) live bands of all kinds, the Fête has gradually expanded to 350 cities around the world, from Barcelona to Budapest to Accra. Carry emergency earplugs. (free, June 21)

**4 BACHFEST, LEIPZIG, GERMANY** > In a city famous for its music history—classical greats Bach, Wagner, Schumann, and Mendelssohn lived here—Bachfest has filled grand churches with top orchestras for more than a century. (free to \$115 per event, June 10–19)

**5 GRANADA INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL OF DANCE AND MUSIC, SPAIN** > Rudolf Nureyev and other legends have performed here, but the ballet and classical music festival is renowned for its location, centered in the 650-year-old fortress, the Alhambra. (\$13–\$85, June and July)



Tuneful Oslo.

## Surprising Musical Mecca

London's music scene may be larger and Berlin's more trendy, but Oslo, Norway, has a cozy, friendlier feel, with some 5,000 shows a year. A diversity of hipster rockers, choral groups, punk bands, and others cram into buildings big and small, from the 12th-floor Stratos chill-out club downtown to the white, dramatically angular Oslo Opera House.



**Tune town:** The band Xyloone performs as part of the Fête de la Musique festival in Paris.

## [ AUTHENTIC GOODS ]

### A HAWAIIAN WELCOME

Garlands of flowers have said aloha to travelers for nearly a century.

**WHAT** The Hawaiian tradition of welcoming visitors with flower leis began in the 1920s. Vendors would line the pier at Honolulu's Aloha Tower to peddle flower wreaths to tourists arriving by boat. It was a custom that those who tossed their strand into the sea as their return ship departed would come back to Hawaii someday. Long before the dawn of tourism, Polynesians were adorning themselves with garlands of fresh flowers, shells, and vines to honor their chiefs. Today, all manner of leis, from origami to orchids, are worn for special occasions as a symbol of aloha, or love, and celebrated throughout Hawaii on Lei Day, May 1.

**WHERE** Contrary to popular belief, not all tourists are welcomed with flower leis upon touchdown in Hawaii. But with some forethought and \$25–50—depending on the type of flowers—you can prearrange such a greeting by contacting one of several companies, including **Greeters of Hawaii**. If you can wait until after your arrival, you'll find a wider selection and more reasonable prices in Honolulu's Chinatown. **Cindy's Lei Shoppe** (1034 Maunakea St.) sells a single strand of lavender orchids for \$6. The fancier the flowers and technique, the pricier the lei: A triple ginger white orchid lei goes for \$35. The **Royal Hawaiian Center** in Honolulu offers free lei-making classes, as do many hotels (for guests only) such as the **Kaanapali Beach Hotel** in Maui.

**TIPS** For the best fragrance, choose tuberose, pikake, ginger, or plumeria flowers. Mist gently with water to keep fresh. If you want your lei to last longer than a day or two, opt for an orchid strand. It's considered bad manners to remove your lei in the presence of the person who gave it to you, and never throw one in the trash. Instead, remove its string and scatter the flowers back to the Earth or sea.

—Margaret Loftus







*Still life:* Boats line the Groenburgwal, one of Amsterdam's quieter canals.

48 HOURS

## Dutch Masterful

Amsterdam buffs up its historic charms. Is the Netherlands' capital entering a new Golden Age? | By **RAPHAEL KADUSHIN**

**W**HEN UNESCO named Amsterdam's central Canal District a World Heritage site in July 2010, the recognition helped rebrand the city. Too often reduced to a racy punch line, Amsterdam has suffered for decades from its loose reputation as Europe's happiest hooker and bachelor-party central. But the UNESCO shout-out has invigorated local conservators and dragged the spotlight back to the grand canals that Rembrandt knew well. Now

flush with newly renovated historic attractions and the kind of ateliers, galleries, and boutiques that the city's original burghers would have appreciated, Amsterdam's recovered heart is more Dutch master than party girl.

**WHAT TO DO** To appreciate the sheer grandeur of the Canal District's watery loop, hop on one of the tourist boats that navigate the area's four major canals (the Singel, Herengracht, Keizersgracht, and Prinsengracht). You'll glide past gabled 17th-century canal houses crowned by stone milkmaids, mermen, swans, and sea monsters.

Then step off near the Singel's venerable **floating flower market**, where vendors still bob on moored barges and bouquets sprout every tulip imaginable (even the dark purple Queen of the Night).

Café Heuvel, a popular "brown cafe," draws in a lively local crowd for Dutch beers. *Above, right:* A room in Hotel de l'Europe features a detail from Vermeer's "The Milkmaid."



Head northwest along the Singel and you'll come to the **Spui**, one of the city's brainiest squares, partly because it draws students from the neighboring University of Amsterdam. The square itself is framed by a jumble of cafés and bookstores, including the venerable **Athenaeum** (the choice shop for Dutch art and history titles), but its real surprise is an easy-to-miss doorway leading from the busy plaza into a hushed, secret garden. This is the **Begijnhof**, a leafy, pastoral courtyard surrounded by medieval houses designed as a refuge for the city's unmarried and widowed women.

The **Foam museum**, one of Europe's most creatively curated small galleries, features revolving exhibits of documentary, fine art, and historic photographs. If that sounds a little sedate, the Dutch taste for the cutting edge means that the works of a few under-30 wunderkind photographers and provocateurs are usually thrown into the mix as well.

The 17th-century **Canal House museum** ([www.hetgrachtenhuis.com](http://www.hetgrachtenhuis.com)), the Canal District's newest star attraction, has just been restored by a team of artists, architects, and cultural historians. Interactive technology helps to depict the evolution of the house and of the surrounding canal district. Life-size images of Amsterdam's Golden Age burghers are projected onto interior walls, like costumed specters reclaiming their finally refurbished house.

The burghers would probably have gone shopping once they settled back in, and you should too. The surrounding area is defined by the **Nine Streets**, the narrow cobbled lanes that link the grand canals and feature Amsterdam's quirkiest one-theme boutiques. Stop off at the **Pompa-dour** bakery for a heavenly peach tart or some green-tea bonbons.

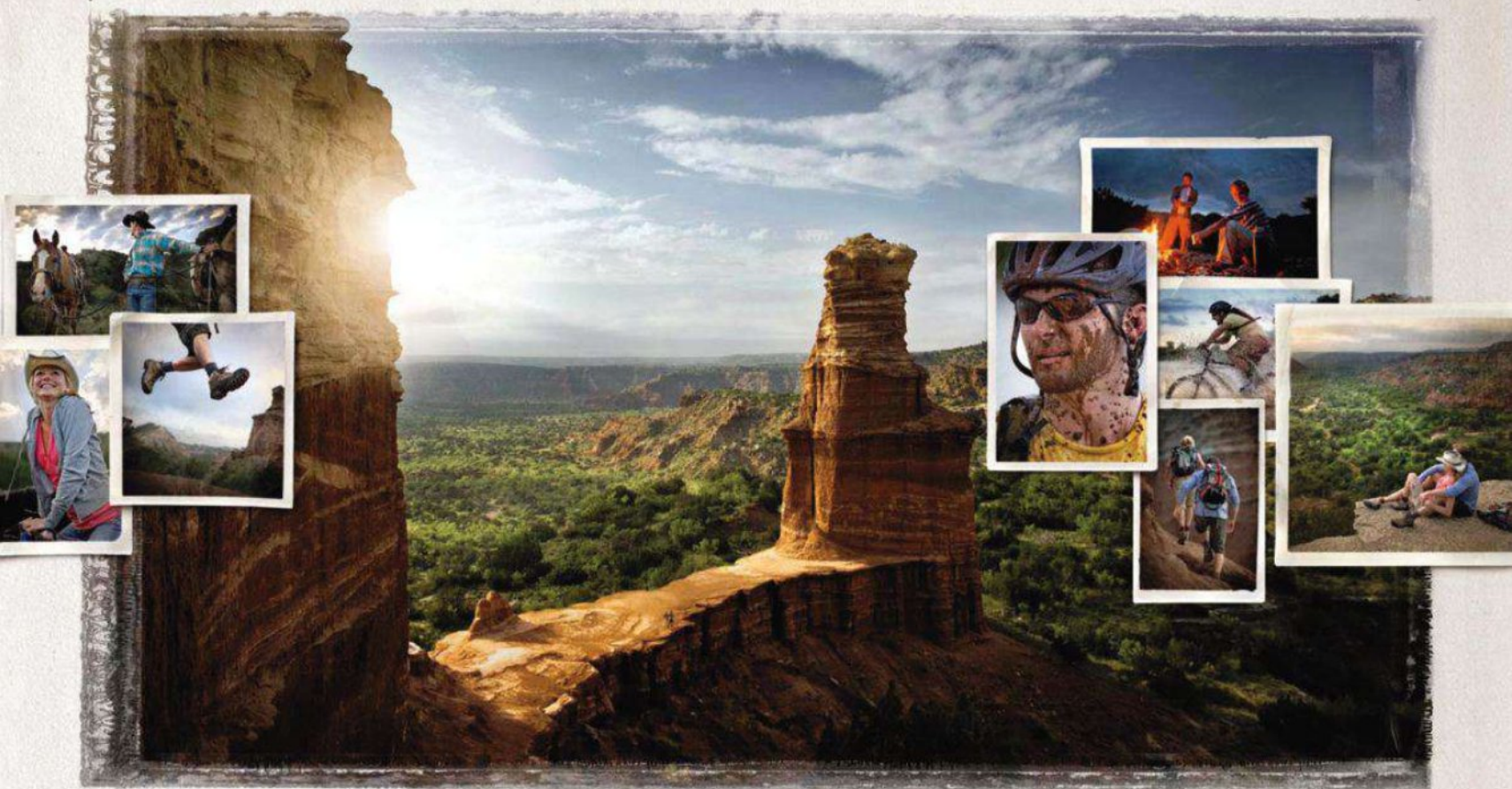
Fashion-forward locals head to **Margriet Nannings's** side-by-side men's and women's boutiques and to **Adrian**, which sells



Thurs. 9:41 p.m.  
Checked the weather online.

Fri. 6:12 a.m.  
Downloaded maps to my GPS.

Sun. 1:05 p.m.  
Found a place that satellites don't know about.



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menswear and shoes in exuberant colors and patterns.

The **Otherist** salvages curiosities such as bins of big gold keys—so even if you can't afford a canal house you can still unlock the door to one. You'll just never know which one. The **Frozen Fountain** is a showcase of contemporary Dutch designers like Marcel Wanders, whose ceramics recycle and fondly subvert classic Delft motifs. Next door at **Prinsheerlijk Antiques**, the artful displays of everything from old Dutch sleighs to baroque chandeliers seem to have dropped out of the portraits lining the walls.

**WHERE TO EAT** The beamed dining room of **Vinkeles**, in The Dylan hotel, is still punctuated by the three brick ovens that once produced bread loaves for 18th-century paupers. Now the



Clothing shop Adrian.

alms have given way to Michelin-starred chef Dennis Kuipers's roasted langoustines and poached pheasant breast.

Local favorite **Bordewijk** juggles haute French and homey Lowlands flavors in dishes like *pâté* of foie gras paired with

Amsterdam pastrami.

Back south on the Keizersgracht the more casual **Café Walem** draws Amsterdam's artsiest crowds to dine on goat cheese melted over brown bread.

Save room for the Indonesian cuisine, a legacy of Holland's former colony, at **Restaurant Long Pura**, where the *rijsttafel* includes sample plates of every signature Indonesian dish, from sweet (chicken in Balinese sauce) to spicy (pork crowned with tomato and chili sauce).

**WHERE TO STAY** At **Hotel de L'Europe** (from \$457), centrally perched on the Amstel River, the 23 suites of the new Dutch Masters Wing each have a highly magnified detail from one of the Dutch paintings from the Rijksmuseum. (You could post a shot online of you posing beside, say, Rembrandt's night watchmen.) The recently opened, 23-room **Canal House** (from \$276) opts for an intimate purple and black color palette and a blooming private back garden anchored by its own garden house, designed for romantic dinners.

The classic canal house hotel, the **Ambassade Hotel** (from \$253) offers peerless



views down the Herengracht from the preferred upper floor rooms. A favorite spot for authors on book tour, the Ambassade also features a library filled with signed volumes left behind by guests like Salman Rushdie, Jonathan Franzen, and Isabel Allende.

While more spartan, the eight-room **t Hotel** (from \$157) still lets you stay in a 17th-century canal house; just don't expect any 21st-century elevators.

The **Seven Bridges Hotel** (from \$151) boasts the view of seven bridges lined up in a row outside several windows. ■

## [ ON FOOT ]

### UP CLOSE IN THE CANAL DISTRICT

*A lived-in vibe makes this an authentic Amsterdam walk.*

If you only have time to explore a pocket of the Canal District, head toward the northwestern end. Anchored by the Prinsengracht canal and merging with the Jordaan, an old bohemian working-class neighborhood, this canal-seamed corner is dense with classic Amsterdam landmarks and actual Amsterdammers (they're the ones whizzing by on bikes).

**1 WESTERKIRK** > Amsterdam's most recognizable monument, this 17th-century Dutch Protestant church contains the unmarked tomb of Rembrandt, who died a pauper, and a 278-foot tower you can climb (just don't count the 186 steps) in summer for the best view of the city. Be forewarned: The top sways a bit in high winds.

**2 ANNE FRANK HOUSE** > Despite daily

troops of visitors, the annex where the Frank family hid for two years before being betrayed to the Nazis still evokes the loss of a life cut short. Anne's salvaged red-and-green checked diary is now on display in the museum's new diary room, inaugurated by Queen Beatrix in 2010.

**3 CAFÉ T'SMALLE** > This double-decker brown café—named for the cocoa-colored patina built up from years of tobacco smoke and age—fittingly started life as an 18th-century distillery and still dispenses its signature jenever (juniper-flavored Dutch gin) under a Vermeer-worthy brass chandelier.

**4 NOORDERMARKT** > The Jordaan's sprawling square draws local bohemians to its two weekly alfresco attractions: the Saturday morning farmers market featuring

wheels of Dutch cheese that could double as spare tires and the Monday morning market that proffers Indian saris, Delft tiles, and much more.

**5 HOUSEBOAT MUSEUM** > This public houseboat on the Prinsengracht lets you sample the claustrophobic yet heady sensation of living life moored to the canals.



Pooch friendly: A stroll in the Noordermarkt.



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**Medieval:** Turku Castle, dating from the 13th century, now houses a historical museum.

## GO NOW

## Secrets to a Fine Finnish City

Turku shines in the E.U.'s cultural spotlight. | *By* STEVEN BESCHLOSS

**W**hile Helsinki typically grabs the attention, Turku, Finland's oldest city, gets its close-up this year (along with Estonia's Tallinn) as a 2011 European Capital of Culture. Both the medieval Turku Castle and Cathedral of Turku remind visitors that this coastal city of 177,000, located about a hundred miles west of Helsinki, was Finland's leading center as far back as the 13th century, when Sweden ruled. Diverse cultural happenings—from the “Alice in Wonderland” contemporary photography exhibit to the cabaret show “Cirque Dracula”—embody the city's cosmopolitan outlook.

**EXPERIENCE OLD AND NEW** > In the city's oldest district, the private museum **Aboa Vetu & Ars Nova**, literally “Old Turku and New Art” in Swedish, highlights medieval ruins (beneath the building itself) and serves up contemporary art exhibitions. Archaeology buffs can see artifacts uncovered by recent excavations.

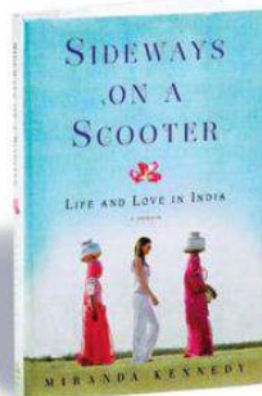
**HEAD TO THE WATERFRONT** > The banks of the **Aura River**, which courses through the heart of the city toward the Baltic Sea, become what locals call their playground—a place to stroll, bike, board a boat, grab a meal, drink a pint, see some art, listen to music, linger. A pleasant 15-minute walk from the water's edge and the city center is the **Luostarinmäki Handicrafts Museum**, an outdoor attraction with 200-year-old wooden buildings that survived Turku's Great Fire of 1827; demonstrations by silversmiths, bookbinders, and clockmakers; and a charming café and shop selling ceramics, gloves, and other goods made on site.



Luostarinmäki.

**DINE WITH FINNS** > Michelin reviewers and Finnish foodies rank **Mami**, with its people-watching patio overlooking the river, as the city's top place to eat. On the menu: pike perch, roasted duck with aubergine caviar, and—the most popular dish—snails with blue cheese. Laid-back **Blanko** serves pastas and Asian-accented fare by day and transforms into a chic DJ-centric hotspot by night.

**SAUNA FOR ART'S SAKE** > European Capital of Culture programming includes a heavy-metal musical, conceptual art works such as Jan-Erik Andersson's onion-shaped sauna with sound effects, and a retrospective of artist Tom of Finland. **Logomo**, a renovated 19th-century factory used for railcars, serves as the central festival venue.



## [ BOOKSHELF ]

## WHAT TO READ RIGHT NOW

*These new books take us on journeys to India, Italy, Tibet, and beyond.*

### SIDEWAYS ON A SCOOTER

MIRANDA KENNEDY

A five-year stint based in New Delhi for National Public Radio provided Kennedy with edgy insights into India old and new. In this book, she presents intimate portraits of the interconnected lives of six contemporary Indian women—some privileged, some poor—to illuminate the riches and restrictions that define everyday Indian life.

### TO A MOUNTAIN IN TIBET

COLIN THUBRON

One of the greatest contemporary travel writers returns with this poignant tale of a pilgrimage to sacred Mount Kailas. His eloquent empathy and meticulous scholarship make this account an extraordinarily transporting achievement.

### THE RAGGED EDGE OF THE WORLD

EUGENE LINDEN

Linden has been writing about off-the-grid places and cultures and the effects of modern encroachments on them since his first journalistic foray into Vietnam in 1971. He revisits adventures from the Arctic to the Antarctic, Papua New Guinea to the Congo, Cuba to Easter Island in this compelling book that spans his 40-year career.

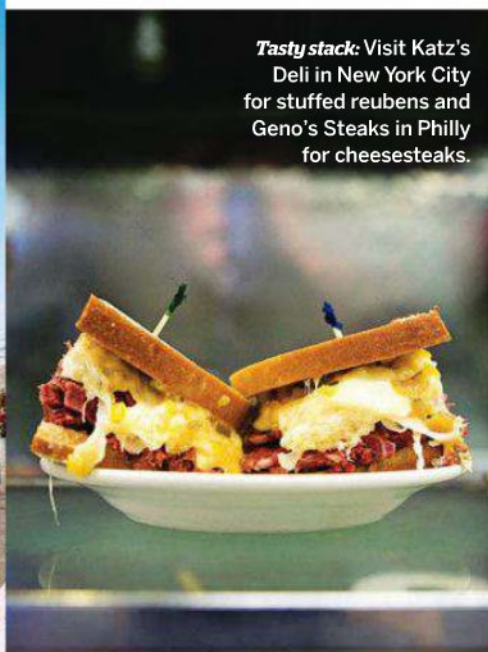
### A YEAR IN THE VILLAGE OF ETERNITY

TRACEY LAWSON

Lawson traces 12 months in the life of Campodimele, the medieval hilltop village in central Italy that the World Health Organization dubbed the “village of eternity” because its residents lead such long, healthy lives. —Don George

Visit our website for our monthly “Trip Lit” column and “Ultimate Travel Library.”





**Tasty stack:** Visit Katz's Deli in New York City for stuffed reubens and Geno's Steaks in Philly for cheesesteaks.

## TASTE OF TRAVEL

# America's Portable Meal

For the real flavor of a city, take a big, succulent bite of its hometown sandwich. | **By CHRISTOPHER HALL**

**T**HOUGH THE sandwich was named for 18th-century Englishman John Montagu, the fourth Earl of Sandwich, only on our shores has it achieved the status of delectable cultural icon. "Sandwiches are part of America like pasta is part of Italy," says Becky Mercuri, author of *American Sandwich*. "Ever since our industrialization it's been the perfect meal for a nation always on the move." Countless regional variations reflect local ingredients, crops, or immigrant groups. The following cities lay proud claim to classic sandwiches worthy of Dagwood Bumstead.

**NEW YORK: REUBEN** Nebraska in the 1920s or New York in the teens or '30s? Debate continues about the origins of this grilled assemblage of corned beef, Swiss cheese, sauerkraut, and Russian dressing on rye, but no one doubts the Reuben came of age

in the Big Apple's Jewish delis. You won't find a more traditional deli for a Reuben than the city's oldest, **Katz's Delicatessen**, a redbrick institution in the increasingly hip Lower East Side. Take a number as you enter and order from one of the workers who hand-carve 5,000 pounds of corned beef each week. A narrow Flatiron District luncheonette that's been visited by the likes of Bono, **Eisenberg's Sandwich Shop** has reubens with corned beef or turkey; pair one with a New York fountain drink like an egg cream or a lime rickey (a blend of lime juice, seltzer, and cherry syrup).

**PHILADELPHIA: CHEESESTEAK** At the corner of 9th and Passyunk in South Philly, this classic sandwich was born at **Pat's King of Steaks** when, in the 1940s, cheese was added to a steak sandwich. But across the street, archrival **Geno's Steaks** claims a superior cheesesteak, a combo of melted

cheese (American, provolone, or Cheez Whiz) and thinly sliced grilled beef in a long roll with cooked onions and bell peppers. Whose is better? Pat's chops its meat; Geno's doesn't; Pat's stand is white clapboard; Geno's is bright orange, and both have seating. A few blocks away, locals swoon over the gooey cheesesteaks at **Cosmi's Deli**, a corner Italian grocery run by the same family since 1932. The lack of tables doesn't deter regulars, who stand outside executing the "Philadelphia lean" (mouth to sandwich, not sandwich to mouth) to avoid splattering clothes.

**MIAMI: CUBAN** The entire sandwich—a sublime marriage of crusty Cuban bread, roast pork bathed in garlicky mojo marinade, ham, Swiss cheese, and pickles—is flattened and toasted in a press. The Cuban arrived in Florida around 1900 with migrant cigar workers from the island. At **Versailles Restaurant**, the longtime Little Havana haunt of community power brokers, the bread is baked in-house; whether you eat in the dining room or stand with the Spanish-speaking locals at the outside counter, a *cafecito* (a tiny cup of bracing coffee) is a must. Sandwiches as well as homestyle dishes such as arroz con pollo, lure gallery owners, auto mechanics, and everyone in between to **Enriqueta's Café**; the no-frills, breakfast-lunch joint is located in the central Wynwood area, home to a burgeoning arts scene.

**NEW ORLEANS: MUFFULETTA** The aroma of olives hits you upon entering **Central Grocery**, a timeworn shop that claims to have originated this sandwich in the early 1900s. Named for its round Sicilian sesame bread, the muffuletta is layered with mozzarella, provolone, Italian cold cuts, and chopped olive salad; walk three blocks to enjoy your "muff" (or a half of one—they're huge) in Jackson Square, the French Quarter park. Several blocks upriver, in a landmark 1797 French colonial town house said to have been offered to the French emperor as a residence in exile, the muffulettas come heated at **Napoleon House**; classical music wafts through the establishment's shaded courtyard. ■

## CUTTING THE MUSTARD IN AMERICA

*A favorite condiment moves beyond yellow.*

**R**egional mustards are on a roll in the United States, with more flavors than ever before. **Hurley Farms** ([www.hurleyfarms.com](http://www.hurleyfarms.com)), a small, family operation

in the Napa Valley, uses wine from the famed viticultural area to make its champagne-honey-garlic mustard. The raspberry

wasabi dipping mustard, cranberry pomegranate, blue cheese Dijon, and other boldly

flavored blends from the **Robert Rothschild Farm** ([www.robertrothschild.com](http://www.robertrothschild.com)) are produced on a working, 170-acre



raspberry farm in Urbana, Ohio. Handcrafted in small batches in the Black Hills of South Dakota, **Mutchler's Dakota Gold Mustard** ([www.iwantmustard.com](http://www.iwantmustard.com)) comes in three flavors, the original hot, German-style blend and one tempered with a touch of honey.





**Coastal scenes:** Enea Bacci, owner of the Lobster Landing in Clinton, shows off his specialty. In Guilford, an egret (below) wades in a marsh.

#### ROAD TRIP

## Artists' America

The Connecticut coast is a kaleidoscope of pink-tinted islands, salt marshes, and quiet coves. | **By MALERIE YOLEN-COHEN**

**W**HEN AYN RAND needed an atmospheric place to work on *The Fountainhead*, Katharine Hepburn yearned to escape the frenzy of Hollywood, and President Taft sought a summer home, they all came to the central coast of Connecticut, a sliver of the state that many travelers miss. Most assume that the dingy industrial harbors glimpsed through windshields while barreling up I-95 define the Connecticut coast. But it isn't so. Exit the turnpike, hug the coastline, and witness what artists and writers admire about the Connecticut waterfront: salt marshes that spread like the Kansas prairie, buoys that hang from weather-beaten balconies, pink granite outcroppings, and striking views of pristine coves and towns, all in the particular light that inspired the American impressionist movement. From New York City, drive 90

miles north on I-95 to Stony Creek (exit 56) just east of New Haven to begin your coastal drive. Spend a couple of days exploring the region that's a bit Florida Everglades, a bit Maine coast, but singularly Connecticut.



**IN THE PINK** From exit 56, drive two miles south to the Stony Creek Town Dock to take the last tour (4:15 p.m.) on the *Sea Mist* with Captain Mike around the mauve-hued Thimble Islands (named not for their size but for the prolific thimbleberry), a grouping of more than a hundred islands, some no bigger than a bread box, others large enough to hold 30 houses. President Taft summered on Elton's Island. Entertainer Tom Thumb, at the height of his popularity, courted a woman on Cut-In-Two Island.

About a mile from the town dock, Stony Creek Quarry still turns out the same building stone upon which Thimble Island homes, both baronial and whimsical, sit. In New York City, chunks of "Stony Creek pink" form the base of the Statue of Liberty, the abutments of the George Washington Bridge, and the entire AT&T Building (now the Sony Tower). While researching her book, *The Fountainhead*, Ayn Rand lived in Stony Creek, gleaning background information for the main character, Howard Roark, who takes a job in a Connecticut quarry.

Stay overnight at the art-filled Linden Point House, the closest you can get to the Thimble Islands without actually being on

WENDY CARLSON (UPPER); FRANK SLACK (LOWER)



one. Walk a few blocks into town to pick up gourmet deli food from Stony Creek Market. Back at Linden Point, enjoy a picnic in the gazebo while savoring the sunset before sinking into blissfully quiet sleep. In the morning sip your first cup of coffee on the patio or in the sunroom while watching mist dissipate from the boat-studded harbor.

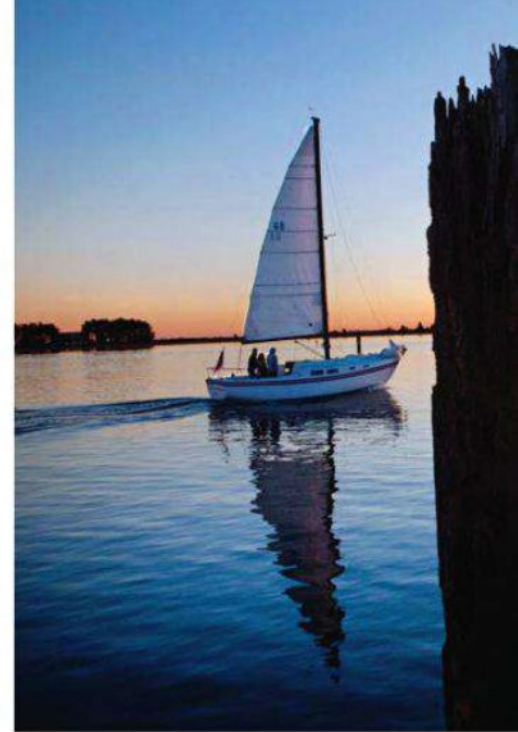
**THE PERFECT SEGUE** From Stony Creek, drive six miles east on Leetes Island Road (Rte. 146), passing small coves, vibrant salt marshes, and pink stone houses that continue along the Guilford shoreline. Guilford is best known for the 1639 Henry Whitfield House, the oldest home in Connecticut (and oldest stone house in New England) and the Guilford Town Green—once a grazing area and graveyard—where tourists now swarm booths at the annual craft festival. If you crave contemporary accessories and wearable art, stop at Mix Design Store and at the gallery and glass studio, Chroma.

To get the best overview of Guilford's historic homes and shoreline, join Rich Petrillo on a Segway tour. "It's a walking tour in fast-forward," says Petrillo, who narrates while rolling with his guests past colonial houses, through the Guilford Town Green, then out to the harbor to see views of the salt marsh, osprey nests, and shorebirds diving into the water. Afterward, if it's a nice day, drive east on Route 1 about a half mile to "put your rump on a stump" at the Place, an outdoor, seasonal (May-Oct.) spot which counts Martha Stewart among its fans. Cooks, presiding over a humongous flaming grill, roast clams, lobster, and corn to perfection.

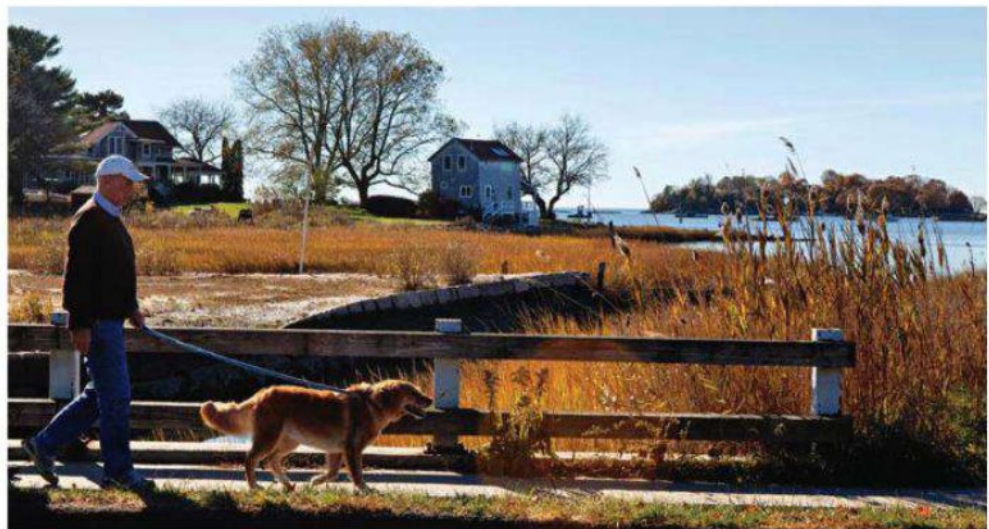
**PADDLE ESCAPE** Continue east on Route 1 ten miles to Clinton, where antiques buffs will enjoy sifting through vintage goods at

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**HEPBURN'S HAUNT** From Clinton, drive six miles east on Route 1 past gas stations, shopping centers, and numerous marinas in Westbrook, where thickets of sailboat masts create the illusion of forested coves.



Turn right on Route 154 toward Old Saybrook Shore Points, crossing causeway bridges and traveling through neighborhoods where relatively modest homes front an ever widening Long Island Sound. In Fenwick, actress Katharine Hepburn lived in a secluded beachfront







**Coastal scenes:** Enea Bacci, owner of the Lobster Landing in Clinton, shows off his specialty. In Guilford, an egret (below) wades in a marsh.

#### ROAD TRIP

## Artists' America

The Connecticut coast is a kaleidoscope of pink-tinted islands, salt marshes, and quiet coves. | **By MALERIE YOLEN-COHEN**

**W**HEN AYN RAND needed an atmospheric place to work on *The Fountainhead*, Katharine Hepburn yearned to escape the frenzy of Hollywood, and President Taft sought a summer home, they all came to the central coast of Connecticut, a sliver of the state that many travelers miss. Most assume that the dingy industrial harbors glimpsed through windshields while barreling up I-95 define the Connecticut coast. But it isn't so. Exit the turnpike, hug the coastline, and witness what artists and writers admire about the Connecticut waterfront: salt marshes that spread like the Kansas prairie, buoys that hang from weather-beaten balconies, pink granite outcroppings, and striking views of pristine coves and towns, all in the particular light that inspired the American impressionist movement. From New York City, drive 90

miles north on I-95 to Stony Creek (exit 56) just east of New Haven to begin your coastal drive. Spend a couple of days exploring the region that's a bit Florida Everglades, a bit Maine coast, but singularly Connecticut.



**IN THE PINK** From exit 56, drive two miles south to the Stony Creek Town Dock to take the last tour (4:15 p.m.) on the *Sea Mist* with Captain Mike around the mauve-hued Thimble Islands (named not for their size but for the prolific thimbleberry), a grouping of more than a hundred islands, some no bigger than a bread box, others large enough to hold 30 houses. President Taft summered on Elton's Island. Entertainer Tom Thumb, at the height of his popularity, courted a woman on Cut-In-Two Island.

About a mile from the town dock, Stony Creek Quarry still turns out the same building stone upon which Thimble Island homes, both baronial and whimsical, sit. In New York City, chunks of "Stony Creek pink" form the base of the Statue of Liberty, the abutments of the George Washington Bridge, and the entire AT&T Building (now the Sony Tower). While researching her book, *The Fountainhead*, Ayn Rand lived in Stony Creek, gleaning background information for the main character, Howard Roark, who takes a job in a Connecticut quarry.

Stay overnight at the art-filled Linden Point House, the closest you can get to the Thimble Islands without actually being on

WENDY CARLSON (UPPER); FRANK SLACK (LOWER)



one. Walk a few blocks into town to pick up gourmet deli food from Stony Creek Market. Back at Linden Point, enjoy a picnic in the gazebo while savoring the sunset before sinking into blissfully quiet sleep. In the morning sip your first cup of coffee on the patio or in the sunroom while watching mist dissipate from the boat-studded harbor.

**THE PERFECT SEGUE** From Stony Creek, drive six miles east on Leetes Island Road (Rte. 146), passing small coves, vibrant salt marshes, and pink stone houses that continue along the Guilford shoreline. Guilford is best known for the 1639 Henry Whitfield House, the oldest home in Connecticut (and oldest stone house in New England) and the Guilford Town Green—once a grazing area and graveyard—where tourists now swarm booths at the annual craft festival. If you crave contemporary accessories and wearable art, stop at Mix Design Store and at the gallery and glass studio, Chroma.

To get the best overview of Guilford's historic homes and shoreline, join Rich Petrillo on a Segway tour. "It's a walking tour in fast-forward," says Petrillo, who narrates while rolling with his guests past colonial houses, through the Guilford Town Green, then out to the harbor to see views of the salt marsh, osprey nests, and shorebirds diving into the water. Afterward, if it's a nice day, drive east on Route 1 about a half mile to "put your rump on a stump" at the Place, an outdoor, seasonal (May-Oct.) spot which counts Martha Stewart among its fans. Cooks, presiding over a humongous flaming grill, roast clams, lobster, and corn to perfection.

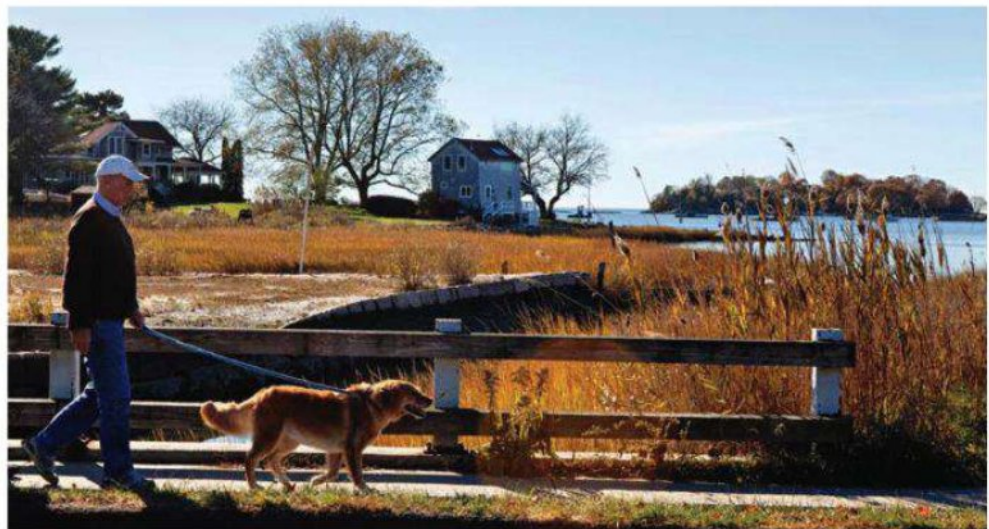
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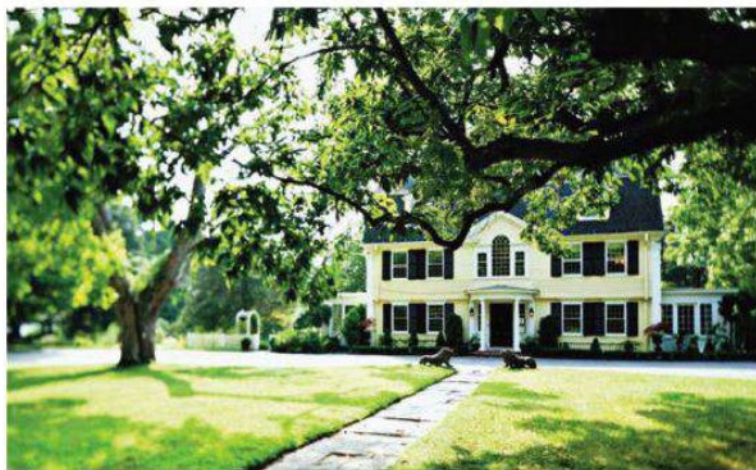
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**Dappled sunlight:** The romantic Bee and Thistle Inn sits beside the Lieutenant River in Old Lyme. A sailboat (left) sets out at sunset on Long Island Sound in Clinton, an area popular for catching bluefish. Man and his best friend (below left) take a walk in Stony Creek, where boats launch for Thimble Island tours.

mansion until her 2003 death at age 96. Take in a film or live show (dance, theater, and opera) at the new Katharine Hepburn Cultural Arts Center—affectionately called the “Kate”—in the center of town. Ignore the condo-like exterior and stay at the antique-furnished, waterfront Saybrook Point Inn and Spa (which provides discounted tickets to the Kate) for great marina and sound views, or head back onto I-95 North and cross the Connecticut River to Old Lyme for some French refinement at the nine-room Bee and Thistle Inn with on-site Chestnut Grille restaurant, a favorite of celebrity chef Jacques Pépin.

**SOAKING UP THE LYME LIGHT** Old Lyme remains a thriving art colony and bird-watching paradise (home of the late Roger Tory Peterson, who wrote *Peterson's Field Guide to Birds*). Each morning, fog creates the hazy tableau of an impressionist painting, a blurred, muted landscape in the very spot considered the birthplace of American impressionism. You can easily spend a day at the Florence Griswold Museum, a compound that includes a Georgian-style main house, a modernist gallery building, a large barnlike studio, and acres of gardens and plantings set on the Zen-serene Lieutenant River. In the early 1900s, to keep from losing her home after her husband died, Florence Griswold rented rooms to artists drawn to the brilliance and clarity of light in Old Lyme. Among her boarders over the years were Childe Hassam, Henry Ward Ranger, William Chadwick, and dozens more who painted on every surface available, including Griswold's cupboards and doors. See the painted cabinets during the main house tour and view hundreds of other paintings on exhibit both in the

main house and in the museum's Kriebble Gallery. Before leaving, don a smock and, with paints and canvas in hand (all provided in the price of admission on Sunday afternoons), walk behind the studio to the meadow-like banks of the Lieutenant

River. There you may fulfill your artist fantasies in the place that inspired American impressionists. You'll jump back onto frenetic I-95 with a greater understanding of the artistic appeal and beauty of the Connecticut coast. ■

#### [ TOOLBOX ]

## GREAT APPS FOR THE LONG, LONESOME HIGHWAY

**T**he ideal road trip is equal parts good planning and serendipity. Here are a handful of apps that can smooth the way for more of the latter.

**PACKING PRO** creates lists of clothes, toiletries, and gadgets to pack based on your destination, the temperature, and the number of days, adults, and kids. Micro-managers can build their own template from over 800 items. **(\$2.99) iPhone, iPad.**

**NAVIGON MOBILENAVIGATOR** turns your smart phone into a navigational system with all the standard features—easily navigable maps, voice guidance, 3-D views—and then some, including animation to show drivers which lane to choose, real-time traffic information, and Zagat's reviews (for iPad and iPhone users). **(\$59.99) Android, iPhone, iPad.**

**ROADSIDE AMERICA** ensures you don't blow past the world's largest ball of twine or a giant fiberglass Muffler Man by alerting you to the wacky roadside attractions along your route. Other features keep a running tally of which of the 6,000 sites you've visited, notifies you when you've lollygagged, and reminds you to snap that last daylight photo at sunset. **(\$2.99-\$5.99) iPhone.**

**FAMILY CAR GAMES** packs one hundred games that can help quell unrest in the backseat on those long stretches between stops. Choose one based on level of difficulty, length, number of players, and type, such as memory games. Or shake your phone for a random pick. **(\$1.99) iPhone.**

**TRIP JOURNAL** creates an instant scrapbook, documenting your travels as they

unfold, recording your route, distance, and waypoints. Family and friends can tune into social networks and media-sharing portals, like Facebook, YouTube, Flickr, and Picasa to check your progress in real time plus view full-screen photos, videos, and blog entries. **(\$2.99) Android, iPhone, iPad.**

**YELP** is the word of mouth writ large on the Web. The app version mines your phone's GPS to help you find the nearest gas station, pharmacy, or taco joint, complete with addresses and maps. Its millions of users provide candid reviews of local businesses to narrow your choices. **(Free) Android, BlackBerry, iPhone, Windows.**  
—Margaret Loftus







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## FAMILY

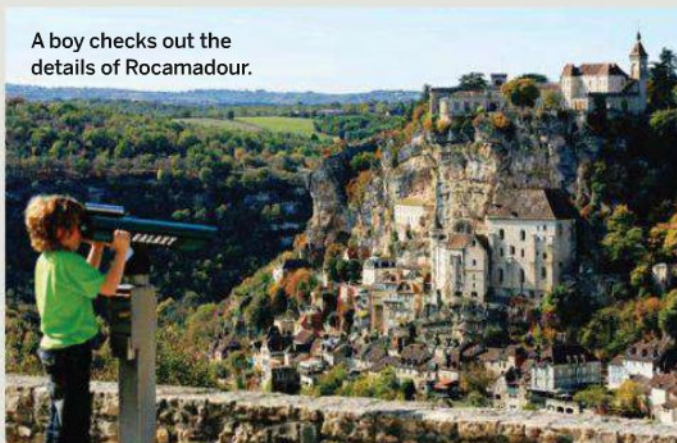
# Children in France?

How to bring rural France to life for unplugged kids. | By LIZ BEATTY

**THE DORDOGNE** > Live like royalty for a week by renting a wing in the private 13th-century Château de la Bourlie. This 1,450-acre estate (with swimming pool) in the east is home to one of the Dordogne's oldest surviving noble families whose name dates back to the tenth century. In nearby medieval Sarlat, shop for local cherries, Cabécou goat cheese, and *pain au chocolat* at the open-air market. Nearby, explore some of the 147 prehistoric sites of UNESCO World Heritage designated Vézère Valley, including the troglodyte cliff shelters of La Roque Saint-Christophe and the 17,000-year-old cave paintings at Grotte de Font-de-Gaume. At Château de Castelnaud, climb the towers and check out all manner of weapons, including giant crossbows and catapult-like machines called trebuchets. Take the little night train in Rocamadour for a 30-minute tour of the magically lit castle and village that lines the narrow gorge of the Alzou River.

**NORMANDY** > From the World War II Caen Memorial to Mont-Saint-Michel, Normandy has great museums and cathedrals, and kids will find a thousand years of hands-on history hiding in plain sight across the region's towns, beaches, and rural landscapes. Starting in Rouen, learn to paint opposite the Cathedral Notre-Dame on the very spot Monet put his studio in 1892 (lessons can be

A boy checks out the details of Rocamadour.

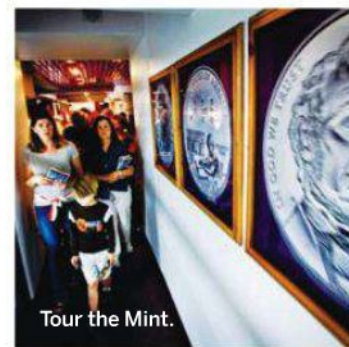
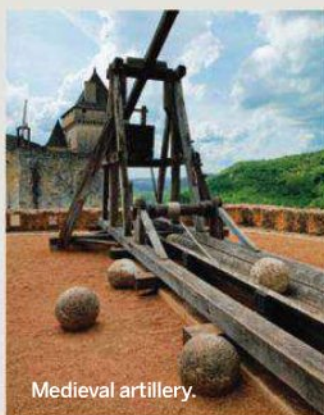


arranged through the tourist office). Among Old Rouen's half-timbered houses, climb the ornate Gros-Horloge clock tower for 360° views of the area. In Place du Vieux-Marché, stand by the cross marking where 19-year-old Joan of Arc was burned at the stake in 1431. Aided by a guide or guidebook, soak in the vast scale and lore of the Allied landings of June 6, 1944—at the cliffs of Pointe du Hoc; on the tidal flats of Omaha Beach; along the rows of graves at Colleville-sur-Mer. View memorabilia displayed

at Café Gondrée, where yards away, British 6th Airborne gliders landed behind enemy lines just before midnight on June 5th, 1944.

**THE LOIRE** > Ideal for family bicycling, the Loire's quiet roads pass through sumptuous landscapes that link seemingly endless handsome châteaux—many of which offer meals, lodgings, and tours. Near Tours, stay and dine at Château de Brou, a 15th-century storybook castle with rooms themed after local historic figures such as philosopher René Descartes. Among the château's home-grown dinner specialties, sample French sirloin with Chinon gooseberry tart. Nearby, climb the grand staircase of Azay-le-Rideau's Renaissance château built over the Indre River. Test your agility on the ropes course at Saint-Benoît-la-Forêt. In Chinon, rent a canoe or kayak and paddle the meandering Vienne River past vineyards and farms.

Medieval artillery.



Tour the Mint.

## [ ITINERARY ]

## DOING DENVER WITH KIDS

Where to have hands-on fun in the Mile-High City.

**PLAY** Take a free tour of the **Denver Mint** to see nickels, dimes, and quarters being made. Visit the **Molly Brown House**, the 1889 mansion of the “unsinkable” heroine of the *Titanic* disaster. In LoDo, teens can catch some air at **Denver Skate Park**. Young kids can get behind the wheel of a life-size fire engine at the **Children's Museum**. Nearby, at the **Downtown Aquarium**, touch rays as they swim by in a pool.

**EAT** Just across the pedestrian bridge over I-25, stop at the **Little Man Ice Cream** (housed in a 28-foot replica of an old-fashioned milk can) for home-made ice cream in such flavors as Mexican chocolate and cupcake. At **Pasquini's Pizzeria**, kids can create their own pizza and, while it bakes, make puffy sculptures with the leftover pizza dough.

**STAY** The historic **Brown Palace Hotel** has hosted presidents and rock stars (the Beatles stayed here in 1964). Little ladies and gents sample house pastries at the English high tea served in the hotel's eight-story atrium crowned with a stained glass ceiling.

—Irene Rawlings



**Crossing the Bridge:** Park the car and run, walk, or climb across one of these famous bridges. Michigan's five-mile **Mackinac Bridge** (left) clears traffic on half the bridge for walkers for one day each September. The 1.5-mile **Walkway Over the Hudson**—the world's longest pedestrian-only bridge—is a former railroad span that affords great views of New York's Hudson River Valley. Climb the catwalk of West Virginia's **New River Gorge Bridge**, the highest (876 feet) vehicle-carrying bridge in the U.S. The bridge shuts down for pedestrians in October. —Jeannette Kimmel



## ADVENTURE

# Sailing the High Seas

Hoist the main, set the jib, and plot a course for these world-class cruising destinations. | *By* **BENJAMIN SHAW**

**A**ccording to the late actor and sailor Errol Flynn, "There is nothing like lying flat on your back on the deck ... silence except for the lapping of the sea against the side of the ship. At that time you can be equal to Ulysses and brother to him." Not skilled enough to go bareboat? Hire a skipper, even a crew, and conquer the islands.

**BRITISH VIRGIN ISLANDS** > Steady trade winds, crystal water, and line-of-sight navigation make this an ideal sailing destination. More than 30 Caribbean islands make up this **British Territory**, home to one of the world's largest charter sailboat fleets. Explore caves on Norman Island or relax with a rum punch at Foxy's beach bar on Jost Van Dyke.



**CHESAPEAKE BAY** > This mid-Atlantic estuary, the largest in the **United States**, offers thousands of square miles of sailing ground yet remains protected from ocean swells. Pull up to the dock at Cantler's on Mill Creek for steamed blue crabs or spend some time ashore in "America's Sailing Capital," Annapolis, Maryland.

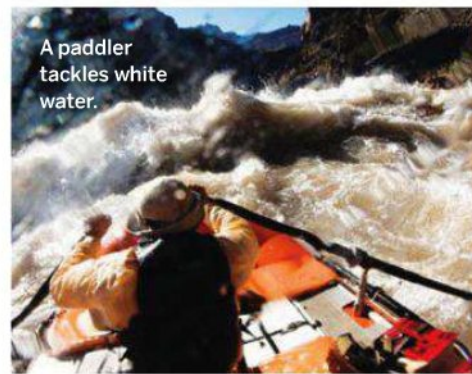
**NOVA SCOTIA** > This maritime province in **eastern Canada** offers unspoiled anchorages and welcoming coastal communities. Thousands of offshore islands create a maze of rocky nooks and crannies. Sail into the past with a visit to the old British colonial settlement of Lunenburg. Then, enjoy the modern museums and art galleries of Halifax.

**WHITSUNDAYS** > These 74 tropical islands off the coast of **Queensland, Australia**, offer picturesque harbors with turquoise water and white sand beaches. Don a mask and plunge off the side of the boat to revel in the wonders of the world's largest reef system, the Great Barrier Reef. Charter outfits cater to all levels of sailors, from novice to old salt.

**DALMATIAN COAST** > With plenty of reliable wind and more than 1,200 islands to explore, **Croatia** is a celebrated European yachting destination. After a day sailing the Adriatic, find a remote cove, berth at a modern marina, or moor off a sleepy fishing village. Ashore, visit what some claim to be Marco Polo's birthplace, tour a Roman emperor's palace, and wander a warren of streets in Trogir, an ancient walled city on a tiny island.



**Bay watch:** Chesapeake charms include regattas and Old Bay-spiced steamed crabs (inset).



A paddler tackles white water.

[ **ASK A PARK RANGER** ]


## RAFTING DOWN THE GRAND CANYON

**Q** *I've always wanted to raft the Grand Canyon, but planning a trip seems daunting. Can you suggest an itinerary that might work for a paddler new to the park?*

**A** "Exploring the Grand Canyon from the river allows you to experience its changing geology," says ranger Dean Reese, an 11-year veteran. "You witness time unfolding before you and feel the oldness of the Earth as you float through the canyon." Reese says that the first step to planning a paddling trip is knowing what type of experience you want. Are you a day-tripper or ready to spend several nights camping on riverbanks? Do you want to paddle yourself, have someone paddle for you, or be steered downstream on a motorized pontoon boat?

**The Hualapai Tribe** offers a day-long paddle that launches from Diamond Creek and travels 55 miles downriver ([www.grandcanyonwest.com](http://www.grandcanyonwest.com)). "The first 12 miles are white water, and you get some thrilling rides," Reese says, "but it's calm for most of the trip." For families, Reese suggests a half-day, smooth water trip offered by **Colorado River Discovery** ([www.raftthecanyon.com](http://www.raftthecanyon.com)) that stretches 20 miles upstream from Lees Ferry.

Sixteen commercial outfitters offer longer guided river trips lasting three days to two weeks and including meals and camping equipment. Visit the website of the **Grand Canyon River Outfitters Association** ([www.gcroa.org](http://www.gcroa.org)) to compare trips and decide which part of the canyon you want to see. Upper Canyon highlights include the tumbling natural spring waters at Vasey's Paradise and the massive cave of Redwall Cavern. The Lower Canyon is known for its waterfalls, swimming holes, and white water. —*Janelle Nanos*

 Want to ask a park ranger? Submit your question to [travel\\_talk@nps.org](mailto:travel_talk@nps.org)

PETER MCBRIDE (UPPER), DAVID TROZZO (MIDDLE), KEVIN T. GILBERT/GETTY IMAGES (LOWER)





**Heady sight:** Hammerhead sharks school near Cocos Island, Costa Rica.

# EXPERIENCE

## Going Off the Deep End

A dive with sharks near Costa Rica's remote Cocos Island offers lessons for living. | **By SARAH ROSE**

**S**CUBA DIVING NEAR a rock pinnacle, I look out into the blue and see a 12-foot shark with what seems like an inexplicably pointy head swimming toward me. As it nears and comes into focus, the image makes sudden sense: That is no point at all but rather a single round eye looking out sideways from a flat, T-bar skull. That eyeball is looking right at me.

Hammerheads are the circus freaks of the shark world. Scientists suspect they somehow “see” with their heads, navigating by Earth’s magnetic field. They can detect an electrical signal of less than half a billionth of a volt; even our heartbeats are perceptible. I consider the few pounds I’ve put on over the holidays. Have I just fattened myself up for supper? These exquisitely sensitive sharks can be skittish, and though I know the rare attacks are made only in confusion or self-defense, my heart is thumping. The hammerhead passes so close I can count the gill slits—all five of them—and then I shut my eyes.

If I am to be eaten, I certainly am not going to watch.

On discovering I am still whole, I look around and see the sea bottom undulating with up to a hundred sharks. Hammerheads galore skim the sand in a

beautiful and intimidating display.

If there is a middle of nowhere, then I have found it: Isla del Coco is a lone volcanic island some 350 miles off the Pacific coast of Costa Rica. From maps alone,

**“  
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this national park’s singular charms are unapparent; but on inspection, you find that one of the largest uninhabited tropical islands on the planet is surrounded by some of the most densely populated seas.

Sharks of all stripes come to Cocos after mating in far deeper waters; the island is a way station at the intersection of several ocean currents. Cocos is also home to small, energetic yellow barber fish that love to feed on the parasitic copepods attached to the sharks; the barber fish offer relief with a thorough nit-picking of the

shark’s skin. Hammerheads, in particular, will school in the area by the hundreds for the treatments. Cocos, it turns out, is a shark spa.

We are taught to fear these beasts (or perhaps it’s an evolutionary memory retained from the primordial soup; sharks, after all, are some of the oldest predators on Earth); and their very shape is thrilling and threatening, like a B-52 bomber. Cocos attracts not only the reef sharks that sleep all day like harmless house cats but also the deep-ocean travelers: the great hammerhead, Galápagos, and tiger sharks that have been known to munch on man.

Hammerheads circle up to our group and back down to the bottom in a cloud of barber fish. A juvenile shark swims below, trailing 20 feet of nylon fishing line. Though Cocos is a protected park, rogue fishermen cast lines miles long inside the park’s boundaries, illegally hauling up sharks for their fins alone. As many as 73 million are killed annually worldwide to fuel the shark-fin soup trade. With filament looped around its neck, that young shark will keep growing, I later learn, until it eventually chokes to death. It is clear that humans attack sharks with far greater cruelty and frequency than sharks have ever hunted people.

I never want to leave this piece of ocean—and for too long, I don’t—but I have to return to the boat. As I swim up, I see flashes of silver—fish in the distance just at the edge of sight. The hammerhead school follows us, rising with our group, circling. They are curious; we are now the show. I surface, besotted. It feels like love. Shark and man have, however briefly, connected, and I am almost literally breathless: I have nearly emptied my tank.

I have often studied maps and considered the oceans—some two-thirds of the planet—as the blue space between destinations, that thing to get past en route to somewhere else. We hop on planes, skipping from landmass to landmass. Yet for most of the history of human travel, the ocean was a place in and of itself, an integral part of any journey. One of the greatest travel books ever written is about a whale named Moby Dick.

On an uninhabited island, I met the citizens of the sea in all their spine-tingling glory. From that so-called middle of nowhere, sharks reminded me the ocean was a destination, both fragile and full. ■

*Trips depart from the port of Puntarenas, Costa Rica, on the Okeanos Aggressor ([www.aggressor.com](http://www.aggressor.com)) or with Undersea Hunter ([www.underseahunter.com](http://www.underseahunter.com)).*



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Leave: 8:20a – 1:17p  
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**Hyatt Regency Cancun** | Cancun ★★★★★

[Amenities](#) | [Map](#)

User score **4.0** out of 5 [Read reviews](#)

**Park Royal Cancun All Inclusive** | Cancun ★★★☆☆

[Amenities](#) | [Map](#)

User score **4.0** out of 5 [Read reviews](#)

**La Amada Hotel – Playa Mujeres** | Cancun ★★★★★

[Amenities](#) | [Map](#)

User score **4.8** out of 5 [Read reviews](#)

**Dreams Cancun Resort and Spa All Inclusive** | Cancun ★★★★★

[Amenities](#) | [Map](#)

User score **4.2** out of 5 [Read reviews](#)

**The Westin Lagunamar Ocean Resort Villas** | Cancun ★★★★★

[Amenities](#) | [Map](#)

<b>Delta Airlines</b> 1 stop	<b>United Airlines</b> Non-stop	<b>US Airways</b> 1 stop	<b>Continental Airlines</b> Non-stop
8:20a – 1:17p 12:40p – 9:30p	7:45a – 10:05a 12:30p – 6:23p	10:15a – 2:11p 11:50a – 7:55p	8:55a – 11:35a 11:00a – 4:55p
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<b>\$823</b> per person 5 nights <a href="#">Flight info</a> <b>Save \$293</b>	<b>\$809</b> per person 5 nights <a href="#">Flight info</a> <b>Save \$293</b>	<b>\$966</b> per person 5 nights <a href="#">Flight info</a> <b>Save \$307</b>	<b>\$980</b> per person 5 nights <a href="#">Flight info</a> <b>Save \$293</b>
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<b>\$777</b> per person 5 nights	<b>\$763</b> per person 5 nights	<b>\$748</b> per person 5 nights	<b>\$763</b> per person 5 nights

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**Rock of ages:** A woman walks between fairy chimneys in Cappadocia, Turkey.

## ESCAPE

**House of Sand** THE REAL ESTATE MARKET in Turkey hit rock bottom—literally—two millennia ago. But in the **Göreme Valley**, local troglodytes knew how to dig in and carve out a niche. Millions of years earlier, volcanoes erupted over a broad swath of the eastern Anatolian plateau in the center of modern-day Turkey. Early Christians in need of shelter saw potential in the mushroom-shaped rocks and cone-headed pinnacles the eruptions left behind. The result: fairy chimney high-rises—soaring minarets of naturally eroded sandstone, hand-sculpted into craggy proto-condos that could have been designed by Gaudi. Today, subterranean sleepers can spend a night in a cave hotel in Ürgüp or Göreme, the primary starting points for high-plateau exploration. Horseback and hiking expeditions canvass multiple valleys within hours, uncovering weathered frescoes and hidden monasteries. Bus tours track down open-air museums and Silk Road caravanserais, or inns, that date to the tenth century, while sightseeing balloons float above these arid gulches. For modern cave people, each day in Cappadocia ends as it begins, in stony contemplation. —George W. Stone





\*Available early 2011. 2nd row outboard only.





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2011

# stay list

Our Favorite Hotels  
in South America

By **Daisann McLane**  
Photographs by  
**Fernanda Preto**

This year, *Traveler's* list of hotels that exhibit strong sense of place, authenticity, a sustainability ethic, and community involvement tops out at 80 (see page 58). Featured here are sample properties in each of three categories: in town, outside of town, and in the wilds.





Cradled by palm trees, Pousada Pinçinguaba fuses Portuguese colonial architecture and Brazilian folk art. Casa Turquesa's turquoise guestroom (opposite) dazzles with tropical light and sunny linens.



# “A hotel room

is more than just a place to sleep and shower. It is a threshold to an unfamiliar place and culture.”

I wrote that in *Cheap Hotels*, a book inspired by more than 1,001 nights on the road as a newspaper travel columnist. For over six years, hotels were my home, my travel companions, my obsessions. My favorites weren't superluxurious; some weren't even hotels. One of my most transcendent overnights was spent on a tatami mat in a Buddhist monastery near Osaka, Japan. I listened to monks chant at dawn. Good hotels have a strong sense of place,





letting you know you are somewhere—even if that somewhere isn't always an easy place to settle into at first. South America is a terrific place to find these hotels. Through their owners (often eccentrics) and staff (usually local), through thoughtful design and fluency in local ways, they help you settle in—and more. These properties are cultural engines—moving you into the heart of where you want to be.

Our 2011 Stay List South America reveals how much the hotel scene has evolved on this continent. With rising economies, incomes, and tourism, many hotels are catering to savvy travelers, connecting them to traditions and the environment. Our selections are outstanding not because they stand out, but because they blend in. I wanted to explore hotels in three categories: in town, outside of town, and in the wilds. Could I find them in one easy-to-reach area? Yes, it turns out. In Parati, Brazil.

A town of about 33,000 on Brazil's Costa Verde ("green coast"), Parati sits halfway between Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo and can be considered a laboratory for the new eco-conscious Latin American hotel scene. The 17th-century city fell into decline but was rediscovered by artists and creative entrepreneurs about a decade ago. It's become a crucible of sustainable tourism development, short-listed for UNESCO World Heritage recognition not just because of its handsome blocks of Portuguese colonial buildings but for its surroundings. Here, I'd experience the indigenous landscape of Brazil: white sand beaches, a turquoise bay sprinkled with tiny islands, walls of mountains lush with rain forest.

Brazil prides itself on its sustainable credentials; it is said to have one of the greenest of the world's major economies. Not surprisingly, it's the rare property that doesn't liberally inject the prefix "eco" into its literature. But I wanted more than a label. So I turned on my hotel radar to find three unique places.

## INTOWN CASA TURQUESA

How do you know you've found a perfect place to stay? Sometimes it only takes a single e-mail: "What good news that you can come! I'll be happy to receive you in my home." Even before I landed in Brazil, Tetê Etrusco, who owns the Casa Turquesa guesthouse in Parati's old colonial town, was treating me like an old friend.

"Welcome, Daisann," she says as I arrive around noon. Etrusco is petite, slim, with curly brown hair and the coiled intensity of a dancer. She whips into action, pulling out a map to guide me to a favorite haunt, just across the colonial town square, for lunch.

"You want to go to Refúgio," she says. "Sit outside—you can watch the boats. Don't bother ordering a big plate, too much food, too expensive. Just ask for the appetizer version of the prawns stuffed with *farofa*, you know it? Brazilian toasted manioc?"

Casa Turquesa is a meticulously restored 18th-century house with hardwood floors and candy-colored paintings by local artists. Each room is named after a color, and Etrusco hands me the key to the house's namesake "Turquesa." It's large, white, with colorful pillows and wooden shutters that open to a courtyard and blazing tropical light. I've never been to Casa Turquesa before, but this is familiar territory: the private Latin American home converted into a luxurious yet laid-back guesthouse. A generation ago, South Americans of the upper class didn't need a hotel culture because they had second or third houses in the country, in colonial cities,



**Clockwise from left:** At Coupé in colonial Parati, every night feels like a party; Parati's bay, impossibly picturesque, can be viewed from Refúgio, another popular restaurant in town. Prawns stuffed with *farofa* (toasted manioc) is a traditional dish here.



or at the beach. Now the custom of private hideaways is turning public as chic little hotels proliferate.

The “my house is your house” style of hospitality seems to be hardwired into the culture. I enjoy staying in a place where I’m treated like a houseguest instead of a hotel client. Also, I know from experience that a hotel that strives to connect with me personally is also more likely to connect me to the surroundings.

“You want to go cruise on the bay?” Etrusco asks. “I’ll call the boat captain and send my manager, Tiacho, with you. Is tomorrow morning okay?” She quickly lines me up so that even though I have only two days before I move on to the countryside and then into the wilds, I can get a deep sense of Parati. She even brings me a pair of turquoise made-in-Brazil flip-flops to wear indoors. Shoes get soggy in Parati, because twice a day a tidal rush of seawater flows shin deep into most streets, turning the city into something of a Brazilian Venice. The Freemasons invented this system in the 18th century—engineering the town so that tides from the bay clean the streets.

The next day, Casa Turquesa’s manager, Francisco “Tiacho” Baenniger, comes to accompany me on a short cruise around Parati’s bay. He’s a lithe, handsome middle-aged man with Latin manners and dark sunglasses. We amble down to the long wooden dock that juts out into the blue bay. He points out his favorite wooden fishing boats, all painted in garish shades of green, yellow, pink, red, and orange and each one proudly bearing a carefully hand-lettered name.

“Aren’t they beautiful?” Tiacho half sings, half sighs. “It’s the Brazilian way you know—you paint something in bright colors, and it makes you feel so much better!”

Casa Turquesa, as it turns out, is Tiacho’s day job. “I am an artist. I do art naïf, naive art—did you see my paintings in the hotel?” The exuberant childlike canvases adorning the lobby are his. Tiacho tells me the town has a big colony of artists. “Parati was almost like a ghost town until the artists and other creative people started to come,” he says.

The artists turned the place into a Brazilian Woodstock, a Santa Fe. And then travelers started to arrive. Now the tourism economy supports the artists. Suddenly I understand that the reason I feel so at home at Casa Turquesa isn’t just because of its genial owner. The hotel is part of a sustainable system. I’m not talking about reusing towels or recycling bottles, although the hotel does that. There’s another kind of sustainability that involves the human spirit. Parati’s bohemians provide the creative energy that makes people want to come here; meanwhile, hotels like Casa Turquesa offer artists a nurturing environment and an audience. It’s a balanced system. In my book, perfect. But like all ecologies, fragile.

Etrusco meets me to say goodbye in the morning, but Tiacho isn’t around—it’s his day off. I get a lift to Parati’s bus station, just outside the boundaries of the old colonial town. It looks like a strip mall, and I feel cast out of paradise. As I’m handing my bag to the taxi driver, I feel someone tap me on the shoulder. I jump and turn around. Tiacho.

“I came to say goodbye and wish you happiness as you continue your journey,” he says. He thrusts something into my hand, embraces me, then quickly turns and is gone. I’m so

undone by his gesture it takes me a beat to realize what I have in my hand: one single, perfect, long-stemmed rose. ■ **Casa Turquesa** 9 rooms; from \$468, including breakfast. [www.casaturquesa.com.br/casa\\_ing.asp](http://www.casaturquesa.com.br/casa_ing.asp)

## OUTSIDE OF TOWN POUSADA PINGUABA

For most of the drive between Parati town and Pinguaba village, I stare dreamily at the wall of undulating mountains to my right, which looks like a massive green ocean crashing to the shore in waves. It’s only at the end of the ride, as we turn from the highway onto a small road into the Serra do Mar State Park, that I realize that Serra do Mar means Mountain of the Sea.

This is the natural wall that separates Brazil’s rich interior from its coast. Once the rain forest covered almost the entire 4,654-mile length of Brazil’s coast; now the Serra do Mar park, slightly smaller in area than New York’s Long Island, is one of its last uninterrupted stretches. And I’m going to be surrounded by it. I’ve reserved a room at Pousada Pinguaba, a small seaside hotel that is a remarkable experiment in human ecology, a beach resort that shares a village with 400 fishermen and their families.

“I’m sorry the room is a little smaller maybe than what you’re used to,” says Talia, one of the pousada’s lively managers, who meets me with fresh-pressed orange juice (from the pousada’s organic farm) and an unstoppable smile. “But, you see, we are not allowed to make this building bigger.” Under Brazil’s stringent new environmental law, she explains, nothing new has been built here since 1979, when the state park took over the area. The pousada, a large wood and plaster house in the old-fashioned colonial plantation style, was built in 1977, abandoned after that, then later brought to life as a hotel.

Talia has no need to apologize. I’m completely comfortable in my all-white room with a double bed dressed in organic linens and a wide balcony hung with a hand-crocheted hammock. This room doesn’t try to impress with acres of mattress and enough space to run laps. At cocktail hour in the pousada’s lounge, I sink into a sofa, and soon I’m sipping the house’s homemade organic *cachaça*—a punch-packing sugarcane liquor—while chatting up my fellow guests: honeymooners from Cincinnati, a couple from Munich, and families from Holland and São Paulo. We nibble on organic white cheese made here and talk about politics, the weather, and travel. It’s a scene you’d find at any small beach resort, anywhere in the world, I think to myself, except that nearly all 28 Pinguaba staffers are citizens of Pinguaba village. And in some intangible yet real way this alters the ambience.

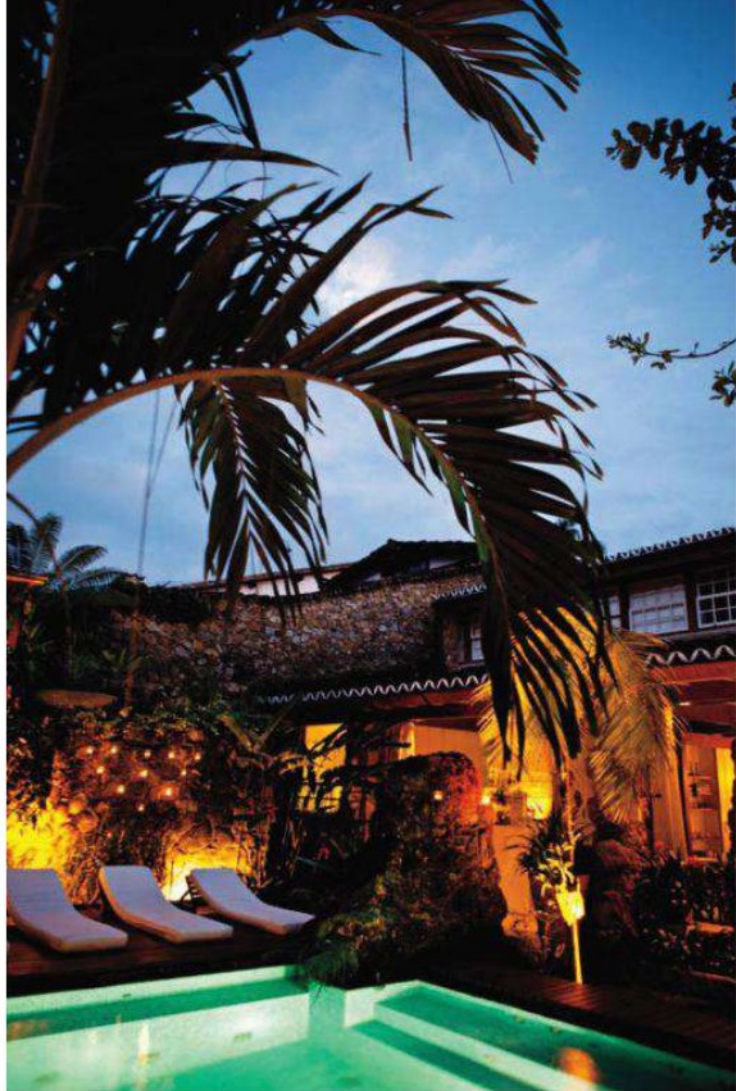
“I feel like a houseguest here,” says Jo, the woman from Holland. “It reminds me of the backpacker places I used to stay in Bali when I was young.” She smiles. “But with more comfort.”

“If you run a hotel in a location like this, there’s no question—you have to work with the community,” says Emmanuel Rengade,

**“I feel like a houseguest here,” says Jo, the woman from Holland. “It reminds me of the backpacker places I used to stay in Bali when I was young.” She smiles. “But with more comfort.”**

*Clockwise from top left: Casa Turquesa was restored in 2008 in colonial style; it fits right into the neighborhood. Artist Francisco “Tiacho” Baenniger (who also manages Casa Turquesa) goes for the colorful in his sculptures and paintings; breakfast at Turquesa centers on fresh tropical fruit. Bright and exquisitely shaped, a *Heliconia rostrata* graces Pinguaba’s gardens.*







# 2011 stay list

## Where to find our 80 favorites

In addition to being a discriminating where-to-stay resource, the Stay List is an in-a-nutshell look at the geography, history, and architectural styles of ten countries. We've highlighted a handful of properties in these pages. Descriptions of all Stay List 2011 selections, from sophisticated city hotels to rustic retreats in the wilds, can be found at <http://travel.nationalgeographic.com/travel/hotels/>.

### ARGENTINA

- 1 1555 Malabia House Hotel
- 2 Aldebarán Hotel & Spa
- 3 Candelaria del Monte
- 4 El Casco Art Hotel
- 5 Cavas Wine Lodge
- 6 Correntoso Lake & River Hotel
- 7 Don Enrique Lodge
- 8 Estancia Cristina
- 9 Estancia Huechahue
- 10 Estancia Peuma Hue
- 11 Estancia Los Potreros
- 12 Estancia Rincón Chico
- 13 Estancia Villa María
- 14 Finca Adalgisa
- 15 Home Hotel
- 16 Hotel Babel
- 17 Nibepo Aike

### BOLIVIA

- 18 Chalalán Ecolodge
- 19 Ecolodge La Estancia
- 20 Hacienda Cayara
- 21 El Hostal de Su Merced

### BRAZIL

- 22 Anavilhanas Jungle Lodge
- 23 Caiman Ecological Refuge
- 24 Casa Turquesa
- 25 Cristalino Jungle Lodge

- 26 Do Lado de Lá Eco Lodge
- 27 Eco-Farm
- 28 Ecopousada Teju-açu
- 29 Hotel Villa Bahia
- 30 The Maze
- 31 Pousada Mangabeiras
- 32 Pousada Pinguaba
- 33 Pousada Les Roches
- 34 Quinta do Bucanero
- 35 Reserva Natural Palmarí
- 36 Ronco do Bugio
- 37 Santa Teresa Hotel
- 38 Toca da Coruja
- 39 Uakari Lodge
- 40 Uxua Casa Hotel

### CHILE

- 41 Alto Atacama Desert Lodge
- 42 The Aubrey
- 43 Awasi
- 44 The Cliffs Preserve at Patagonia
- 45 Ecocamp Patagonia
- 46 Elqui Doms
- 47 Hacienda Tres Lagos
- 48 Hotel de Larache
- 49 Hotel Salto Chico
- 50 Lapostolle Residence
- 51 The Lodge at Valle Chacabuco
- 52 Tierra Atacama Hotel & Spa

### COLOMBIA

- 53 Delirio Hotel
- 54 El Cantil Ecolodge
- 55 Estado Natural Ecolodge
- 56 Hacienda Bambusa
- 57 Tcherassi Hotel & Spa

### ECUADOR

- 58 Black Sheep Inn
- 59 Hacienda Rumiloma

### GUYANA

- 66 Surama Village Eco-Lodge

### PERU

- 67 Casa Andina Colca Lodge
- 68 Casa Andina Hotel Isla Suasi
- 69 Casa Andina Arequipa
- 70 Casa Cartagena
- 71 Colca Lodge
- 72 Explorer's Inn Eco Lodge
- 73 Inkaterra Machu Picchu Pueblo Hotel
- 74 Inkaterra Reserva Amazónica
- 75 Mountain Lodges of Peru
- 76 Posada Amazonas
- 77 Tambo del Inka

### URUGUAY

- 78 El Diablo Tranquilo
- 79 Estancia Vik José Ignacio

### VENEZUELA

- 80 Uruyén Lodge





the pousada's owner. "Nowadays we call this sustainability, but before we just called this common sense." He tells us the story of how he stumbled onto this place while with friends and ended up—impulsively—buying it. "I loved it because I loved the setting, this little fishing village." Which meant, I realize, that the hotel had to fit into—become a true part of—the village.

"It took time," Rengade says. "I had to train the local people in the ways of the hospitality industry." He continues, excited to share his visions for Picinguaba's future. Among other things, he has started a nongovernmental organization to help encourage sustainable village development.

"We already employ local people, and we send our guests to local guides," he says. "But I'd like to get the village more involved. I want to help families open up their own little guesthouses for travelers who maybe don't have the budget to stay in our resort."

"But won't that eat into your business?" I ask. He shrugs. "As long as the villagers can create sustainable, ecologically sound practices with recycling . . . well, it's good for everybody." Rengade is my kind of hotelier. He understands that his hotel is special because it's of the village, not just in it.

The next morning I head down the narrow, steep path from the hotel for a stroll around Picinguaba. It's 10 a.m., and the fishermen have just come in. Some of them are dragging woven plastic sacks overflowing with silvery fish to the cars of a couple of wholesalers who've arrived to buy the morning's catch. Others have hit the town "bars"—the little clutches of red plastic tables and chairs, protected by overhead tarps tied to poles. They're kicking back with red wine and Antarctica beer. I notice that the German guests from the pousada are here, too. They wave me over.

I wave and smile, but I don't join them—it's too early for me. But I'm tickled to see that the Germans are on "Picinguaba time," and that the line between the travelers and the locals is relaxed enough for that to happen. I head back to the pousada and almost don't recognize the beautiful young woman walking down the path to the beach, lugging a surfboard under her arm.

"Hey, Daisann!"

It's Talia from the pousada. "It's my day off," she beams, "and I'm going to the beach for some sport. Have a good day! Ciao!"

Yesterday she was the pousada's manager; today, she's Talia from the neighborhood, from Picinguaba. The small miracle of tourism at Pousada Picinguaba, I decide, is that its guests have the chance to meet them both. ■ **Pousada Picinguaba** 10 rooms; from \$355, including breakfast. [www.picinguaba.com](http://www.picinguaba.com)

## IN THE WILDS ECO-FARM

When I found out about the self-sustaining organic farm and homestay in the mountains above Parati, my curiosity was piqued. What would a guesthouse with a zero carbon footprint look like? I sent e-mails to Michael Smyth, owner of an adventure tour company in Parati that arranges trips to the farm, and set up a day-trip.

"Bem-vinda!" Swinging a machete, José Ferreira da Silva Neto—nicknamed "Zé," a sturdy man in his 50s with a wild black beard and cherubic cheeks—walks in from the field and to the path to welcome me. The Eco-Farm is actually his family farm and home, which he decided to open to the public eight years ago. He's sweating, and so am I. A lot of places claim to be off the beaten track, but the Ferreira farm actually is. It's a two-hour walk up a



Pousada Picinguaba's basic pleasures: Pool and beach. Opting for the sandy choice (upper) could mean an encounter with turtles. Indoors (lower), there's no TV, no Internet, no phone, no air-conditioning. Just peace.



# Checking In

This year, *Traveler's* annual hotel roundup recognizes South American properties that are tuned to the environment, community, and local traditions. To surface these places, we tapped into the wide-ranging experiences of seasoned travelers, journalists, and local experts. Further research narrowed the field to 80 spots. Details on each property can be found at <http://travel.nationalgeographic.com/travel/hotels/>. Meanwhile, here are three more Stay List hotels to further fuel your wanderlust. (Prices are for a double room.)

## IN TOWN

### 1555 Malabia House

Buenos Aires, Argentina

One of the city's first boutique hotels repurposes a 19th-century convent in the heart of Palermo Viejo, the neighborhood immortalized by novelist and former resident Jorge Luis Borges. Large windows usher in light. Organic breakfast eggs come from on-premises chickens. Explore the local zoo, botanic gardens, and shops, then unwind in the hotel gardens. 15 rooms; from \$126, including breakfast. [www.malabiahouse.com.ar/homeeng.html](http://www.malabiahouse.com.ar/homeeng.html)

## OUTSIDE OF TOWN

### Estancia Vik José Ignacio

Maldonado, Uruguay

The ranch landscape (4,000 acres) is respected (cars park underground) and enhanced (herb and vegetable garden, pool). More than 20 area artists had a hand in creating the place, open since 2009. Stylized red sheet metal roofs and white adobe walls—a step removed from the traditional estancia—hint at Vik's cool design sense. The contemporary

art is first-class. Three windmills lend power; in summer, geothermal energy cools things down. Just east of jet-set Punta del Este, Vik has its share of dazzle—largely in the form of polo players (the polo field here is one of the best in South America). 12 suites; from \$500, including breakfast, Wi-Fi, sauna, taxes. [www.estanciavikjoseignacio.com/indexENG.php](http://www.estanciavikjoseignacio.com/indexENG.php)

## IN THE WILDS

### Awasi

San Pedro de Atacama, Chile

Sense of place, indeed. The mud, wood, straw, and stone used to build carbon-neutral Awasi was collected in the immediate Atacama Desert area. Finds from local markets and antiques fairs fill the rooms, along with traditional fabrics. Outings play on the strong cooperation with local inhabitants, who are familiar with the secrets the desert holds. Among them: geysers, salt flats, lagoons, hot springs, great star-gazing, and horseback riding. 8 rooms; from \$1,350, including meals, drinks, transfers, personal guide, and Jeep tours. [www.awasi.cl](http://www.awasi.cl)

mountain trail from Taquari, a village just a short drive north of Parati town. Smyth, serving as guide, led me to the sunny, high valley and Zé's farm; I felt like I'd climbed all the way to heaven.

It's a heaven of living, growing, things. Zé speaks only Portuguese, and Smyth, a British expat, tries his best to keep up with translation. But Zé is a passionate man—the farm is his life's work—and the words gush, like the mountain stream that he's proudly rigged with an old generator to power a few electric bulbs and a laptop.

"Agrofloresta," Zé is saying over and over as he points out various tropical trees and plants along the path. I think I recognize some—royal palms, manioc, papaya. But, I wonder, where, exactly, is the farm? Everywhere, it turns out. "Agro floresta translates into 'agroforestry,'" Smyth explains. "It means that you don't clear a field in the rain forest and plant just one crop, the way traditional farmers do. Instead, you figure out how to plant your food within the forest, in harmony with other plants."

Zé's eldest son, Jorge, who's about 25 and incredibly fit, arrives on the scene, machete in hand. He and his father have been doing research on how various food crops work together. "We have several growing seasons," Jorge explains. "If I plant beans, for instance, at the base of a fruit tree, when the beans finish producing, the plant will die and nourish the fruit." Almost everything the family—and visitors—eat or use, even soap, is grown and made here, from forest plants.

"Zé and Jorge spend a lot of time hosting researchers from agricultural universities from all over the world," says Smyth. Students are the target market for Eco-Farm's rustic single-bed guest rooms, located in a hand-built wooden cabin. Curtains flap in the breeze through glassless windows. "This is a work in progress," says Smyth. "Most travelers come up just for the day."

It's time to eat lunch with Jorge, up at his place—another 500 feet up the mountain and worth the walk. The view over the Serra do Mar is beyond heavenly, and so is the food—organic, vegetarian, from the forest: the beans, the bananas, the fresh hearts of palm. There's even something that looks like noodles but is actually a salad of the white, stringlike seed pods that spring from palm trees. It's all prepared by Jorge's wife, Dani, from Rio. "I studied agriculture at university, did an internship at the farm, met Jorge..." As she smiles, their baby son, Emmanuel, comes wriggling, on all fours, out of the new house that Jorge finished fixing up just in time for his son's arrival. The hotel lover in me begins to envision possibilities. What terrific guest cabins you could build here, filled with the hand-carved chairs, stools, and beds Jorge is making from local hardwood and surrounded by the flowers that Dani has planted everywhere. I try to communicate all this to Jorge, through Smyth's translation, and he smiles politely. I realize I'm thinking like a modern traveler, not an eco-farmer.

"Up here, things move more slowly," Smyth explains. "So when it's ready, it's really right. Come back next time you're here and check in again." ■ **Eco-Farm** 2 rooms and multibed dorm, from \$250, including two lunches, one dinner, one breakfast, and guide. [www.eco-farmbrazil.com](http://www.eco-farmbrazil.com)

DAISANN McLANE, a contributing editor, writes our *Real Travel* column. FERNANDA PRETO, based in São Paulo, Brazil, specializes in travel outdoor photography.

It's a two-hour hike into the mountains to reach the Eco-Farm, also known locally as Sítio São José (upper); under the guidance of the Ferreira family, the rain forest yields fruits and vegetables, served up here for an exotic organic lunch (lower).

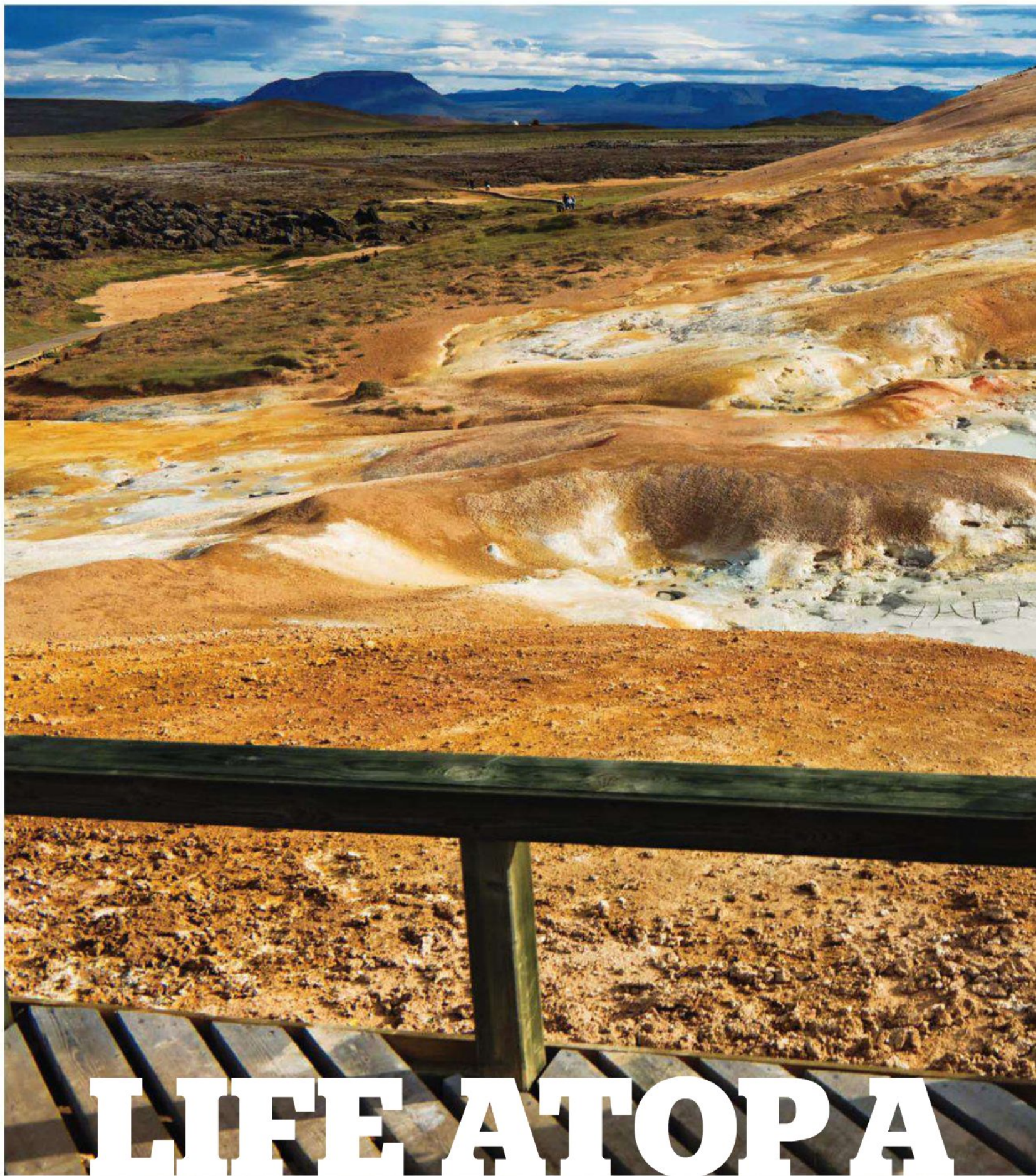
Underwater stars light the Estancia Vik pool.











# LIFE ATOP A CAULDRON





Visitors create their own heat at a thermal zone at the Krafla caldera in northern Iceland. Lava flow from the 1980s (upper left) still mars the landscape.

## THE AUTHOR'S VOLCANIC ODYSSEY ACROSS ICELAND'S AUSTERE INTERIOR TAKES IN A BLACK GLACIER, SOME RED-HOT CONTROVERSIES, AND LESSONS ON LIVING WITH LAVA.

BY JONATHAN B. TOURTELLOT | PHOTOGRAPHS BY BROOKS WALKER



# “I CAN TAKE YOU UP OVER THE VOLCANO!”

exclaims the enthusiastic pilot. “This is a unique opportunity in human history! We will fly down into the new ice canyon like a slalom.” He weaves his hands snakelike, adding helpfully: “Down is better. Flying up the canyon, we might crash.” He spiels on, a nonstop lava flow of commentary on volcanic wonders, environmental outrages, government foolishness—I lose track. The volcano in question is Eyjafjallajökull, whose ashy eruptions last year famously shut down European air traffic for days, creating the worst aviation stoppage since World War II (and also a pronunciation stoppage among American newscasters; most resorted to “that vol-CANE-oh in ICE-land”).



The pilot in question is Iceland’s irrepressible Ómar Ragnarsson, 70, renowned radio entertainer, filmmaker, news anchor, journalist, comedian, politician, and environmentalist. This summer, he interrupts blogging about threats to his treasured Icelandic countryside to show people close-up views of Eyjafjallajökull (“EHya-fyettla-yuh-kuttle” comes close) from the cockpit of his 35-year-old Cessna 172.

The prospect gives me pause. Putting my life in the hands of an excitable, geriatric pilot who wants to air-slalom down a restless volcano in a rattletrap plane is, well, not quite in our plan.

But it’s close. My wife, Sally, and I have made volcanoes the theme of this visit to Iceland (our third together and my sixth). We always relish this island nation’s mix of a literate, unusual culture of 309,000 overachievers and a wild, weird landscape. During humid Virginia summers, when the crisp Icelandic air beckons, we grab any excuse to go, including an eruption.

Iceland sits atop the Mid-Atlantic Ridge, the belt of mountains and rift valleys where episodic eruptions widen the floor of the Atlantic Ocean. Hoping to learn what it’s like to live on such tumultuous real estate, we’ll follow the country’s main volcanically active zone from the Westman Islands off the south coast, across the Arctic desert interior, to the town of Húsavík on the northeast coast. Our only worry: Will the recent eruption have attracted crowds of tourists?

## **The Black Glacier**

ON OUR ARRIVAL IN ICELAND I posed a different question to our old friends Ingibjörg (Inga) Elíasdóttir and Árni G. Sigurdsson. It concerned Eyjafjallajökull’s more active volcanic neighbor to the east.

“Will Katla erupt?”

That wasn’t just idle curiosity. Katla is the biggie. When it blows, it flash-melts part of its ice cap, sending an Amazon-size flood—the infamous *jökulhlaup*, or glacier burst—across the coastal plain to the sea. That would wipe out everything in its path, including part of the national Ring Road around Iceland.

Inga shrugged. “All my life Katla has been about to erupt.” We sat at the dining table in Inga and Árni’s weekend house in Grímsnes, about an hour east of Reykjavík. Plate-glass windows framed a table mountain, where, in 2008, they saw an earthquake trigger a landslide.

Katla goes off every 70 years, give or take 50. The three times in history that Eyjafjallajökull erupted previously, Katla followed within a year or two. Maybe we should be more fearful ourselves.

We had met Inga, a public health inspector,





Diners bundle up at Húsa-  
vík, a whale-watching center on Iceland's north coast.  
*Opposite:* Cyclists tackle  
the Sprengisandur track  
across the island's highland  
interior. The jeep road, open  
in summer, follows the  
main volcanic rift zone.





Formations of basalt columns amaze visitors at Jökulsárgljúfur gorge, a "Louvre of lava" in Iceland's Vatnajökull National Park. *Opposite:* Eyjafjallajökull erupts with clouds of ash in April 2010, causing hundreds of Icelanders to flee their homes and disrupting European air travel for days.



and Árni, a now retired airline captain, 15 years ago on holiday in the Caribbean. We have visited back and forth with the married couple ever since. For them, living with at least one eruption every few years is part of life. “Pilots practice for it,” Árni said. “Often it’s best to fly under the ash, because the volcano sends it so high.”

Everybody has stories about the 2010 eruptions. On Eyjafjallajökull, east of the main summit crater, an eruption opened vents, building two new cones. Inga showed us photos of it from her post-eruption hike last May. “That’s a new mountain,” she said with pride: In Iceland, we *make* mountains. On the volcano’s northern slope, lava flowing beneath a shallow glacier collapsed the overlying ice, creating the ice canyon that Ómar wants to fly me through.

We drove east toward Eyjafjallajökull in Árni’s vibrantly red 4WD pickup truck. The mountain’s ice cap crowned the morning mists—in black, not white. “It looks like a mistake in the sky,” Sally noted. Two to three feet of sooty ash blanketed the volcano’s glacier.

We stopped at a shopping center and ran into Thorey, the wife of a pilot friend of Árni’s. Ash and floods from the eruption, she tells us, cut off the couple’s return to Reykjavik during a weekend outing to the south coast. To get home, they had to drive for two days counterclockwise all the way around Iceland. She pointed to the family dog in her car, named for the volcano. “She is Eyjafjallaskotthildur.”

“You actually call her that?” I asked.

“See her tail? It’s white at the tip and black farther up—like the white glacier covered in ash,” Thorey said. She gazes fondly at the dog. “We call her Skotta for short.”

Whew.



Now, near Hvalsvoellur, Árni takes us to meet Ómar, who’s holding court in the lobby of a hotel in his customary jacket and tie, laptop in mid-blog. I give in to his persuasion, and we adjourn to a nearby airstrip where his weathered Cessna awaits. Sally gives me a disconcertingly hard “come back alive” kiss. Ómar and I strap in and take off.

In minutes we’re flying over the braided river flowing from the valley behind the volcano, the terrain below a mix of summer green and black patches of residual ash. Soon we top Eyjafjallajökull’s capping glacier, a weirdly fractured, blackened crust. It looks like a fallen soufflé burned on top.

“There’s the canyon,” Ómar yells over the engine. Black and white turrets of ice and ash rise on each side of a winding layer of steamy fog. He dives low over the mist—plenty thrilling—but







Cousin to the famous Blue Lagoon near Reykjavík in the southwest corner of Iceland, the Myvatn Nature Baths spa opened in the northeast in 2004. It has the same soothing temperatures and cobalt color, an effect of suspended minerals in the water.

isn't satisfied. "I think I can get under it," Ómar shouts. Oh, great.

He banks and climbs back to the summit, then turns sharply. We dive under the fog layer, slaloming down the canyon, ice walls not far from each wing tip. He slows to a near stall, flying the plane with one hand and shooting pictures with the other. He's either a great aviator or a terrible one. It's a helluva ride.

The canyon is "something humans may never see again, especially if global warming melts the glaciers," Ómar tells everyone after we land (while I'm still exhaling). Clearly he considers Iceland's explosive geology remarkable. Various faults, rift valleys, grabens, and fissures form as tectonic plates carry Europe and North America apart. The two main rift zones that cleave southern Iceland leak lava, spew hot springs, and sprout new volcanoes.

The western zone rises from the sea, becoming the Reykjanes peninsula, then turns inland from Reykjavík, counting among its famous features Thingvellir, the valley where in Viking times the Icelandic parliament met outdoors, literally on the edge of a fissure; and Geysir, the geyser field that gave us the word.

### **Incendiary Islands**

BUT WE GO NEXT TO THE southern branch of the rift zone, which has made new land more recently—offshore. We're following a plastic-lined trough dug through packed ash (tephra) on Heimaey, the main island in the Westman archipelago off Iceland's south coast. Rounding a bend we see something white and angular peeking out. It's the top corner of a two-story house.





Excavation here at the “Pompeii of the North” has begun. A sign stuck in the cinders names the family that lived here before January 23, 1973, when a fissure opened in the fishing port town of Vestmannaeyjar. Luckily, the fleet was in harbor and, as the fountain of fire grew, evacuated the island’s population of 5,300 within hours. Árni tells us how his islander friend Johann Johannsson recalls the eruption. “He was 12 when it happened. The day of the evacuation, he remembers that his mother made them finish breakfast before they could leave for the boats.” Ah, Icelanders! The eruption can wait while you finish your oatmeal.

The eruption created a mountain and bulldozed some 300 homes. Battalions of boats tried to halt the advancing lava with hoses, and the effort may have worked. The flow stopped short

of sealing the port, actually improving the harbor, though many houses collapsed under the weight of falling ash.

When I first visited here in summer 1973, just after the eruption ended, the ash was still hot. The rugged island was surreal then, a volcanic haze defying a fierce wind, black ash still covering slopes. Residents hadn’t yet returned, but workers and international volunteers were cleaning everything. Notices at the Reykjavík airport warned Heimaey visitors that if walking on the black lava to make sure their soles didn’t catch fire. At the time, a local guide took me to a house only two-thirds buried in ash. We clambered down into an upstairs window, through the bedroom, and into a narrow hall. “This door leads downstairs,” he said, and opened it. A hellish blast of moist air heated by the nearby lava burst out. The ceiling





Torfajökull is a hot spring area in the Fjallabak Nature Reserve. Nearby are Eyjafjallajökull and Katla, brooding volcanoes expected to have major eruptions—someday.

rained condensation. He slammed the door shut.

Now, 37 years later, we grab lunch in the Café Kro, where weekend tourists from Reykjavik relive the eruption via a grainy documentary film—old history. To me, yesterday.

By 1974, islanders were running pipes through the lava and using it to heat the recovering town. Nowadays, geothermal heating meets the heat and hot water needs of 92 percent of the nation's buildings. A first-time visitor emerging from a Reykjavik washroom told me, accurately: "One of those taps is connected to a glacier and the other to the depths of hell." Reykjavik even heats some streets and sidewalks. In 1980, the outflow from a new geothermal power plant 29 miles away on the Reykjanes peninsula began drawing bathers with its mineralized, cobalt-colored water. It evolved into the famed Blue Lagoon spa, a top tourist attraction.

But geothermal power, which I've long thought the most benign of renewable energies, has become contentious. After the 2008 economic collapse, during which the value of the kronur fell by as much as 76 percent against the dollar, national leaders have been willing—too willing, say some—to sell Iceland's two abundant resources, namely, fish and energy. A third resource is the scenery that attracts us tourists. And therein lie the controversies.

On the way back to our friends' cottage, I'm reading in the capital's sassy English-language biweekly, the *Reykjavik Grapevine*, an open-letter debate over geothermal plants. It's between singing star Björk and Ross Beaty, CEO of a Canadian geothermal

company named, yes, Magma. Magma Energy Corp. has won a government contract that, says Beaty, will bring in needed foreign revenue. Björk counters that more geothermal plants will deface the landscape, overtap the geothermal fields, and spew too much volcanic gas into the air. I recall Ómar railing about a geothermal plant proposed for a pristine part of the rift zone up north. That's where we're headed next.

### Between Glaciers

THE PAVED ROAD GRADUALLY CLIMBS OUT of the lush southern farm country. From the pickup's four-person cab, we watch the vegetation get thinner, farms sparser, the land drier, the horizons farther, and the sky closer. In 40 minutes we've gone from cozy countryside to the Highlands, an uninhabited, big-sky wilderness. The pavement ends as we proceed across Iceland's desert interior on the F26, or Sprengisandur track, paralleling the rift zone. The dusty track is just wide enough for two vehicles to pass and open only in summer.

You can make the 124-mile crossing in just a day, weather and water levels permitting. Nevertheless, Árni has provisioned the truck to last a nuclear winter. We bump along at a respectable pace through open volcanic desert. Within a couple of hours the Hofsjökull glacier is filling the skyline to the west. A few mountain peaks appear above the ice. "I've climbed that one, and that one last year," notes Inga, grandma mountaineer. "The glacier



is melting back,” she adds. We are crossing a corner of Europe’s largest national park, Vatnajökull. Its namesake glacier, also Europe’s largest, sprawls far to the east. We can see the edge of it on our right. Beneath it lies the heart of the cauldron.

Iceland is not only a seafloor spreading zone, it may even be causing the spreading. Under Vatnajökull, an upwelling plume of magma—a hot spot—from the Earth’s mantle feeds the volcano Grímsvötn, which erupted in 1996, 1998, and 2004. The ’04 outburst melted through some 500 feet of ice in about an hour and sent up a blast of ash that reached Finland. Some geologists say the hot spot may be breaking apart the Earth’s crust like a spike splitting a weak plank. If there is a point where Europe and North America are truly wedged apart, it’s here.

The summer sun is still high at 6 p.m., when we finally descend into the Krókdalur valley. We admire a series of glacier-fed waterfalls. Pavement returns. By nightfall we have reached our farm-stay hostel near the charming north coast port of Húsavík, a whale-watching center. Local interests are at odds with Icelandic traditionalists elsewhere who insist on continuing the country’s controversial whaling industry. The Húsavík economy now depends more on people who prefer seeing whales in the water, not on their dinner plates.

### Power Plant Perils

THE BEST KNOWN ATTRACTION UP HERE in the north end of the rift zone is Mývatn, a relatively shallow lake famed for its many waterbird species (including more than 25 species of ducks) and assortment of geological oddities: fissures with hot spring-fed pools you can swim in; the ash crater of Hverfjall, formed in a single eruption; Dimmuborgir, the Dark Castles, a tangled maze of volcanic rock; and “pseudocraters,” formed when trapped water popped through overlying molten lava as steam. The lake also has a new geothermal spa, Mývatn Nature Baths, a mini Blue Lagoon.

But I want to explore the area just to the north, where the Krafla volcano threatened the daring geothermal power plant built on its flanks in the 1970s. The plant was one of the first to tap a “high temperature field,” making the project a learning experience. One well blew up, leaving a crater. Magma shot out of another borehole. Fissure eruptions continued right up the valley. These “Krafla Fires” spewed intermittently for years, as the valley grew three feet wider. On a 1981 visit I explored a new layer of coal black lava (remembering to check my shoes) and saw how only an intervening rise of land kept it from flooding the power plant.

Almost three decades later the lava looks... the same! Just as jarringly black. Now, though, we join tourists on a boardwalk that allows everyone to stroll around, exploring the flow and sniffing the sulfur from steam vents. The flow sits in the grassy valley like a spill of lumpy fresh tar, “as if someone started to pave the landscape,” remarks Sally, “and just walked away.” It may take decades, even centuries, for moss, then grass, to colonize it.

The power plant works pretty well now and is interesting to see. A jeep track goes farther north into a still pristine area called Gjástykk, but it’s chained, awaiting the proposed geothermal plant that Ómar fumed about. Gjástykk is a band of terrain shredded with parallel fissures. It’s one of the last undeveloped places on land where you can see how the Earth forms new crust.

“But you can’t go there until it is harnessed with wells and pipes and power lines,” Ómar complained. “This is nonsense!”

The Ómar-Björk camp says enough is enough. “You could make more money with tourism,” argues one geologist. Should Gjástykk be tapped for industry or preserved as a World Heritage site? So goes the debate.

### Hellfire in Hexagons

WE DON’T KNOW IT YET, but we’re standing inside a volcano. A 130-foot-high mass of strangely hexagonal stone, twisted at a scramble of odd angles, towers into the sky above us.

“These are the Echo Cliffs,” says Hjörleifur Einarsson, who manages this northern section of Vatnajökull National Park, northeast of Krafla. “We are looking at basalt columns of every form and size possible.” He explains that some 8,000 or 9,000 years ago the huge fissure around us erupted in a five-mile-long lava flow, filling this gorge to a point far above our heads. Later, catastrophic floods eroded parts of the flow away. “So now you get to see what a volcano core looks like from the inside.”

This gorge is a world wonder camouflaged by syllables. It’s tough to tell American friends: “Be sure to see Jökulsárgljúfur in Vatnajökulsthjóðgardur!” (In English, that would be “See Glacier River Canyon in Water-Glacier National Park.”)

Neither language does it justice. Jökulsárgljúfur gorge is the Louvre of lava, probably the world’s most imposing display of basalt columns. Often the columns are vertical, and Europe’s mightiest waterfall, Dettifoss, upstream, flows over some of them. Below the falls, the cathedral becomes more of a colossal fun house, a tumbled tumult of basalt—columns at diagonals, sideways, and in honeycomb cross sections; archways of columns, radial sprays of columns, looming towers of columns like the one above us.

Jökulsárgljúfur’s fine new visitor center, created in 2007, stands at the threshold of the bizarre horseshoe-shaped canyon called Ásbyrgi. The space resembles a giant waterfall gone dry, apparently created by glacial floods 3,000 to 11,000 years ago.

Along the road back to Húsavík, we stop where several old fissures stretch away to the south, a few farmhouses sited fearlessly among them. Beyond lies the very far end of the closed-off Gjástykk area. North of the highway is Skjálftavatn—Earthquake Lake—formed after a series of quakes. Not far beyond, the rift zone sinks back under the sea, snaking onward under the Arctic Ocean. The surrounding summer green pastures make a deceptive coda to our trans-island trek over this restless terrain. So bucolic, so peaceful—until the next time the land jerks wider.

Next day Árni and Inga take us back south across the highlands on the more westerly F35 track. It crosses cinder-strewn parts of the western rift where Magma Energy seeks more geothermal fields. Outside of Reykjavík we share a farewell meal in Inga’s childhood town, Hafnarfjörður, nicknamed “the Town in the Lava.” Charming, brightly painted houses contrast with surrounding battered, black, and barren lava flows, thousands of years old.

We take the road back to Keflavík, the international airport atop the Mid-Atlantic Ridge. This is the landscape arriving tourists first see. Contrary to our worries, they haven’t flocked to Iceland to see the volcanoes. In fact, fears of Katla erupting have apparently kept them away, leaving more of Iceland’s sites to ourselves.

Iceland is one of the only places, as Ómar says, where you can see the Earth under construction. It’s a messy, thrilling, unforgettable spectacle. Eruptions are dangerous and deserve respect, but they are also a travel opportunity.

As our Icelandic friends, old and new, have shown us, you can live with lava. Once we’re aboard our return flight to North America, I reflect that I still haven’t seen an eruption in action. Maybe I’ll keep a bag packed.

Behind us, the volcanoes doze, their bowels astir.

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Geotourism Editor JONATHAN TOURTELLOT is a National Geographic Fellow. Photographer BROOKS WALKER, based in Reykjavík, shot “Bavaria on Tap” for our September 2007 issue.

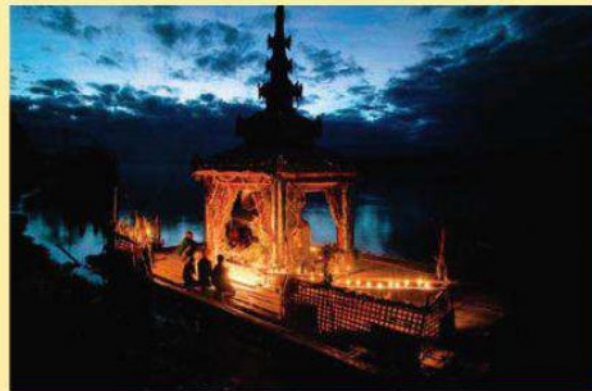


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A photograph of a narrow New York City street. In the foreground, the handlebars and a brown leather saddle of a bicycle are visible. The street is paved and has a metal railing on the left. In the background, there are multi-story brick buildings with windows and a few trees. The lighting suggests it's daytime.

# New Yorkers' **NEW YORK**

Locals divulge their favorites in five classic neighborhoods—so you, too, can live like a New Yorker.

Narrow lanes call for two-wheelers in Greenwich Village.

Photographs by  
**RAYMOND PATRICK**



**T**HOUGH I'M NOT USUALLY very chatty on planes, I do love when, flying home to New York City, I end up sitting next to first-time visitors. They almost always have a slightly wild look in their eyes; it's a sign that they're worried they won't be able to see everything. Their questions spill out, and I'm happy to answer them: Where should I go for dim sum? How do you get to Brooklyn? Have you ever been to the Apollo? What they really want to know: Is three days or five days or even a week enough time?

No. No, it's not. Sorry. I've clocked 40 years living in or near the city, and, though my love/hate for the place grows stronger each year, I would be a fool to say I know it, that I've seen all of it. I know my version of the city. I have my New York. It overlaps the New Yorks of my family members and friends, but my personal map and experience of the city has been of my own making. You will have yours, too.

Lose the list of must-see attractions. Decide that this will be one trip of many. And do as we do: Get to know the city's neighborhoods. In town for a week? Choose three neighborhoods. Maybe four. Spend a



day or two in each. Walk up the avenues. Wander the side streets. Select a random pizza place/food cart/coffeehouse and pronounce it NYC's best. (But say it out of earshot of any locals. We're nicer than you've heard but three times as opinionated.)

Give your neighborhoods of choice a chance. Reject or love them for totally irrational reasons. (New Yorkers do it all the time.)

By day two or three you'll see that each neighborhood is its own New York. The city is no perfect jigsaw puzzle. Smash some pieces together and create your own map. —*Jenna Schauer*



*Clockwise from above: The Guggenheim Museum, an Upper East Side icon, draws in kids on Sunday afternoons for interactive programs. Small dogs find a leafy haven at Carl Schurz Park. J. M. W. Turner's "The Harbor of Dieppe" is just one of the masterworks on display at the intimate Frick Collection.*





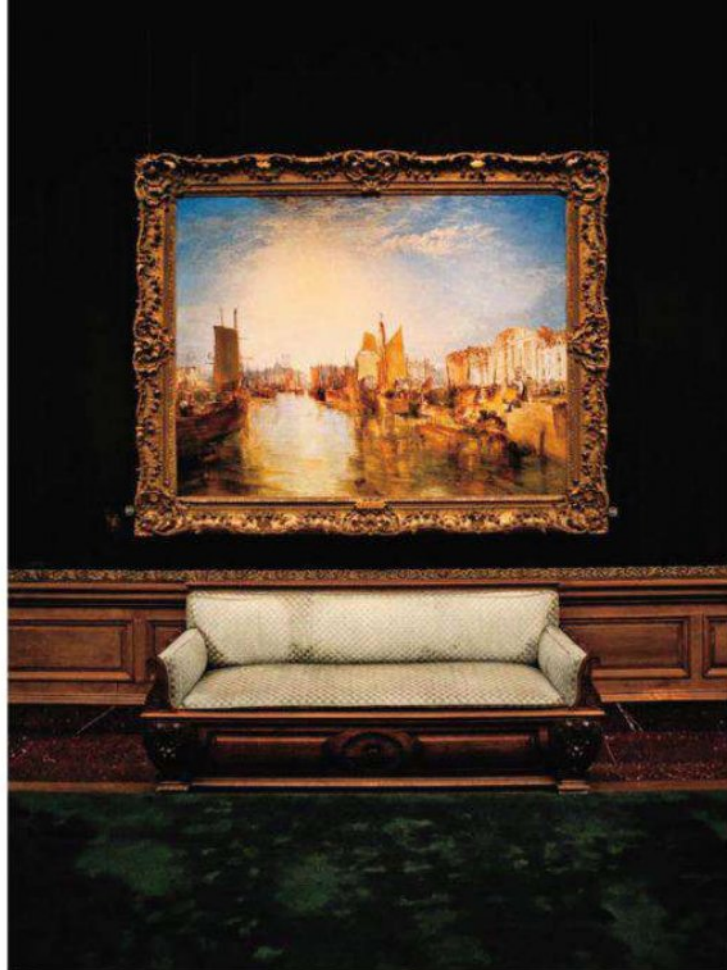
## UPPER EAST SIDE

Central Park and the East River bracket this well-heeled neighborhood's undersung charms.

**T**HE UPPER EAST SIDE may be the oddest of underdogs. Its blocks—stretching from 59th Street to 96th, from the East River to Central Park—house the Metropolitan Museum of Art (1), the Guggenheim (2), the Whitney (3), and the Frick (4). Prominent names live on Park Avenue. Pricey shops—Calvin Klein, Prada, Giorgio Armani—line Madison Avenue. But the Upper East Side gets very little respect from other New Yorkers. “For years it was kind of synonymous with ladies who lunch, and people don’t want to be associated with that,” says Susan Cheever, a lifelong UES resident and author of *Louisa May Alcott: A Personal Biography*. Upper East Siders don’t rush to correct the record. They’re happy keeping the neighborhood’s riches for themselves—and we’re not talking money here.

“It’s a small village. It’s sophisticated but not uptight,” says Eric Ripert, chef-owner of Michelin-starred Le Bernardin, who moved to the UES from the Upper West Side in 1996.

People don’t just live in apartments on the Upper East Side. They live *on* the Upper East Side. They don’t live near the museums. They use the museums as extensions of their living rooms. And then there’s Central Park—claimed by all New Yorkers but a true backyard for those who live uptown. “I’m a fanatic of Central Park,” says Ripert, who spends at least part of every day he’s in town on its paths. “I know the saxophone player and the Rollerbladers. I know everyone over there.”



Feel free to pick your own favorite park bench. Afterward head across Fifth Avenue on 86th Street to the Neue Galerie’s Café Sabarsky (5), which serves Viennese coffee on silver trays. The café’s soft pretzels (paired with Bavarian sausage) put street-vendor versions to shame. Or stroll over to the corner of 81st and Third to share meze at Beyoglu (6), the best Turkish restaurant in the city. (I’m not usually fond of superlatives, but Beyoglu deserves it.) If you get in line at Two Little Red Hens Bakery (7) on Second Avenue, pray that the people ahead of you are placing big orders. You’ll need time to decide between the Brooklyn Blackout cupcake and all those cookies.

Pay homage at the Met but escape to one of its tucked-away spots. Ask a guard in the Asian galleries to point you toward the moon gate of the Astor Court, recommends Cheever. Walk through it into a Ming dynasty scholar’s garden. Don’t ignore the neighborhood’s smaller cultural gems like the Cooper-Hewitt (8) for modern design or the Jewish Museum (9), housed in a mansion built in 1908.

Visit the independent bookstores that still dot the Upper East Side, including Crawford Doyle (10), the Corner Bookstore (11), and Kitchen Arts & Letters (12).



**AROUND THE CORNER** There’s no shame in taking a break to see a movie at the Ziegfeld Theatre in Midtown (141 W. 54th Street). One of the last single-screen houses in New York City, the 1,169-seat theater turns movies into events.

Crystal chandeliers light the grand (though suitably shabby) interior, awash in gold and red velvet. But this is no art house theater. Blockbusters rule the screen. If you’re lucky, you’ll be in town for the opening night of a musical flick. The place often inspires audiences to burst into applause as credits roll. —J.S.





On a bright spring day, it's challenging to secure space around one of the best free with-or-without-kids entertainments New York City has to offer: the small-dog run at Carl Schurz Park (13). A standout little sibling to Central Park and named for the first German-American senator, Carl Schurz starts at the butter yellow Gracie Mansion and curves down along the East River. "The Esplanade on the East River is one of the most beautiful places on Earth, especially at night," says Cheever. "The river is just alive with activity."

You don't mind if we keep it our little secret, do you? —*Jenna Schnuer*

## HELL'S KITCHEN

Old-school attractions mix with hot newcomers where gangs once roamed.

IF THE NAME Hell's Kitchen sounds uninviting, be glad that at least "Battle Row," "House of Blazes," and "Death Avenue" didn't stick. The monikers evoke a time in the early 1900s when the Parlor Mob, the Gorillas,

and the Gophers gangs stalked the streets and nearby docks. But while the neighborhood between 34th and 57th Streets, bordered by Eighth Avenue on the east and the Hudson River on the west, has a dangerous past, today you're more likely to knock elbows with a Broadway star than a rabble-rouser.

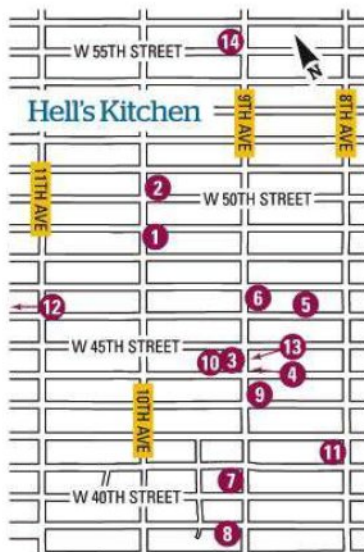
Hell's Kitchen runs right up to the Theater District, which makes for a nice commute for Chad Kimball, the Tony-nominated star of the musical *Memphis*. He has lived in Hell's Kitchen for over a year. "I knew the closer I was to the theater, the odds of being late to work would decrease," he says. "I've been half right."

When he's not on stage, Kimball likes to unwind at neighborhood spots like the whiskey bar On the Rocks (1) and art-filled restaurant Druids (2). The latter used to be called the Sunbrite Bar, where the Westies, a predominantly Irish group of thugs, hung out in the 1970s and '80s. Now you can graze on Long Island duck and peruse the local artwork for sale without fear of Eddie "The Butcher" Cummiskey showing up.

Rudy's Bar & Grill (3) serves up free hot dogs when you stop by for a drink. Just look for the giant pig out front, then head in and take a seat at a booth covered in red duct tape. Or enjoy the tropical vibe and fruit-infused rum at the area's surf hangout, Réunion (4).

The neighborhood's reputation for great food has outlasted even the gangsters. Stroll down Restaurant Row—46th Street between 8th and 9th Avenues—and you'll come across Barbetta (5), an Italian restaurant that's been around since 1906. Don Draper romanced Bethany at Barbetta (much to Betty's dismay) in Season Four of *Mad Men*, an honor that's not lost on current owner (and daughter of the original owner), Laura Maioglio. "Andy Warhol and Woody Allen filmed movies here," she says. "Scenes for *The Departed* were shot here. But nothing has had an impact like having our menu on *Mad Men*."

Save room for dessert because Hell's Kitchen bakes some devilish sweets. Amy's Bread (6) makes calories-be-damned almond brioche toast and coconut dream bars. If you swing by Cupcake Café (7), you may bump into WNYC/WQXR radio host David Garland,



**AROUND THE CORNER** Le Parker Meridien hotel (119 W. 56th Street) is too far east to be within Hell's Kitchen, but the lobby's hidden Burger Joint has all the allure of underground hangouts from the neighborhood's colorful history. Peel back a

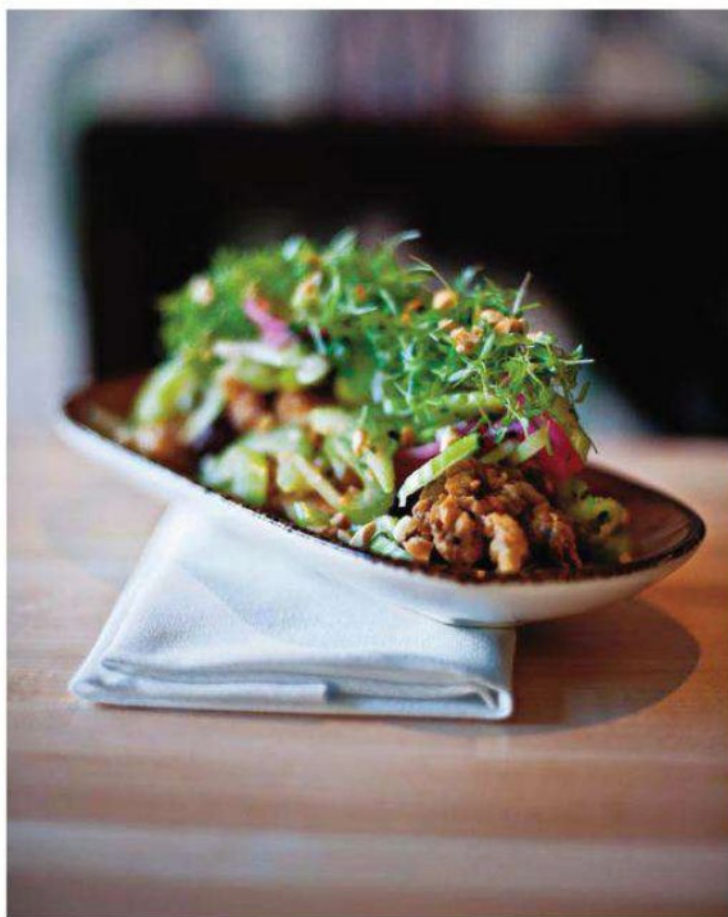
curtain near the front desk to reveal a backroom grill and indulge in one of the juiciest burgers in town. Or satisfy your craving out in the open at Knave, the lobby's Gothic café and bar, where you can get an artful latte (left). The cocktails won't disappoint, either, and the addictive deep-fried olives are free. —*AM*





In Hell's Kitchen, classic Italian restaurant Barbetta attracts theatergoers with its 10 percent dinner discount for same-day ticket holders. *Opposite, above:* Workers at Two Little Red Hens dole out baked goods to Upper East Siders. Indecisive types can create a sampler of bite-size cupcakes.





*Clockwise from left: Village people head to Kin Shop (13), helmed by *Top Chef*'s Season-One winner, for Thai-inspired fare like fried pork and crispy oyster salad; to Jeffrey's Grocery for \$1 cups of Stumptown Coffee; and to Sabon (14) for bath products made with ingredients from the Dead Sea.*





A trio of towers by Richard Meier brings a sleek verticality to the Village's skyline.



the Film Center Building entrance (13) is easy to miss. But step inside, and you'll see why the lobby, created by Ely Jacques Kahn in 1928, is often regarded as one of the finest examples of art deco in the city.

Another unlikely building stands on West 55th and 9th. Opened in 2005, the Joan Weill Center (14) is the largest dance complex in the country and home to the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater. Check out an open dance class; while there, you might share an elevator with Ailey dancer Hope Boykin. She says Hell's Kitchen is a tight-knit community where employees at her local nail salon greet her by name. "They know when I'm on tour," she says, "and welcome me back with a hug."

—Amelia Mularz

## GREENWICH VILLAGE

Winding streets lined with style-setting shops—and one telegenic bakery—make for ideal aimless strolls.

recovering from the "stimulus overload" of browsing the nearby Hell's Kitchen Flea Market (8). The weekend-only market offers everything from old chemistry beakers to a vintage *Dukes of Hazzard* wristwatch.

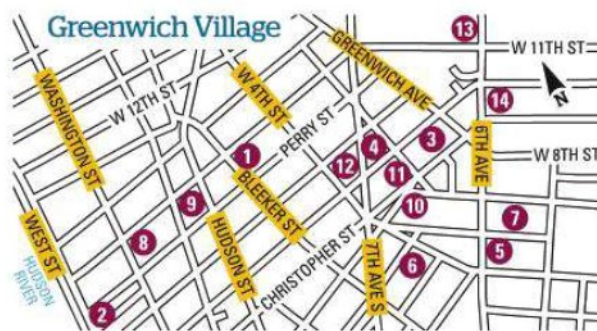
If you miss the flea market, the Thrift & New Shoppe (9) stocks an extensive collection of antique glassware arranged by color. Catch the owner, Minas Dimitriou, when he's not too busy tinkering with jewelry and he might ask you to join him for a glass of wine. The goods at Domus (10) are brand new but no less intriguing. The owners travel the world to find handcrafted gifts, like pillows from Peru and soaps from Afghanistan.

Besides neighborhood shops, Hell's Kitchen has industrial areas and behemoth structures like the Port Authority Bus Terminal (11) (the largest bus station in the country) and the Intrepid Sea, Air & Space Museum (12), which floats on a 27,000-ton WWII aircraft carrier docked on the Hudson River.

And yet the neighborhood surprises with unassuming architectural masterpieces. Tucked between an Italian restaurant and a crepe shop,

GREENWICH VILLAGE is the Big Apple equivalent of the Latin Quarter in Paris or Trastevere in Rome—one of those neighborhoods that inspire ambling and swoons and silent wishes that you could, even just for a short time, call it home. The Village, to use the local parlance, stretches from Houston to 14th Streets, going south to north, and Broadway to the Hudson River, east to west. Already an established village, it managed to escape being harnessed by the 19th-century grid plan for Manhattan's streets and remains a bewildering labyrinth of winding lanes and unlikely intersections (W. 10th and W. 4th Streets, anyone?).

Artists such as Allen Ginsburg, Bob Dylan, Joan Baez, Joni Mitchell, and Jimi Hendrix (whose Electric Lady Studios still buzzes at 52 W. 8th Street) once got their start in the Village. Cheaper rents and bohemian life have since decamped to other parts—unless you know where to look. Beyond the map-wielding tourists, the long queues at Magnolia Bakery (1) (which had cameos in the TV show *Sex and the City*), and the style-setters who patrol the high-end clothes shops that now flank Bleecker Street



**AROUND THE CORNER** The High Line, the second elevated park in the world (after Paris's Promenade Plantée), earned raves from the day it opened in June 2009. Stretching from the Meatpacking District to W. 20th Street (and

eventually to W. 34th Street), this erstwhile elevated cargo railway was saved from demolition by neighborhood activists. It now makes for one of the most pleasant strolls in the city, with gardens, benches, artwork, and views of the Hudson River. Enter the park at Gansevoort and Washington Streets. —D.F.



(one of the most popular thoroughfares in the Village), a real neighborhood still thrives.

It's all right to put the map away and just wander. You may stumble upon a Picasso sculpture in the shadow of the I. M. Pei-designed apartment towers near Washington Square Park. Or be surprised by the discovery of artist/filmmaker Julian Schnabel's gargantuan pink Italian palazzo around the corner from Richard Meier's three modern glass-and-steel towers (2), adding to the Village's incongruent skyline.

Architect Richard Meier, who used to live on Perry Street and whose first major assignment, in 1969, was in the Village (the Westbeth artist colony), says he's seen the neighborhood change dramatically in the last few decades. "The brownstones were a mess, and the area was dangerous. But now everything has been renovated in a wonderful way," he says. "You go in the middle of the week and see people biking and hanging out in cafés."

Every few blocks a coffeehouse, the interior usually clad in warm wood, seems to pop up. Writers and artists hang out at Jack's Stir Brew (3), where the tables are shared, and friendly conversation flows.

Just down the street at Bonnie Slotnick's (4) rare and out of print cookbooks shop, top chefs scan the floor-to-ceiling bookshelves in the hope of finding an old recipe to reinvent.

The Village boasts four Michelin-starred restaurants—Soto (5), Annisa (6), Blue Hill (7), and Wallsé (8). But to really eat like a local, step into English gastropub The Spotted Pig (9)—for a pint of Old Speckled Hen and pig-centric plates such as crispy pork belly with polenta and chard—or one of Gabriel Stulman's three locavore-leaning restaurants: wood-paneled Joseph Leonard (10), convivial Jeffrey's Grocery (11), and 1950s-style Fedora (12).

"In this city filled with commercial, skyscraper-laden neighborhoods, I think people love the Village for its sense of community," says Stulman, who lives above his restaurant Joseph Leonard.

He's right. And we love it because it's the last neighborhood in New York where you can truly get lost. —David Farley

## THE BOWERY

**This former skid row now blooms with cutting edge art and architecture.**

**N**EWYORKERS don't come to the Bowery to find classical beauty. Lined by a mishmash of buildings—representing nearly every major architectural style since the late 18th century, locals claim—the Bowery is a neighborhood-

like street of uneven sidewalks and few trees. From Cooper Square to Chatham Square, it runs like a scar down southeast Manhattan, splitting the neighborhoods of Greenwich Village, the East Village, SoHo, the Lower East Side, and Chinatown.

What the area lacks in aesthetics it makes up for in gritty energy, a fascinating history, and, most recently, a dizzying rate of change. Just half a decade ago, the Bowery was New York's skid row, made up of flophouses and restaurant supply shops. But in the last couple of years, the druggies and delinquents, bums and boozers have moved on, and only one flophouse still operates. The Bowery has quickly become one of Manhattan's most dynamic parts, with hip high-rise hotels flipping on the lights and noteworthy restaurants firing up their burners. In many ways, though, the new-look Bowery is simply reverting to its pre-skid row days.

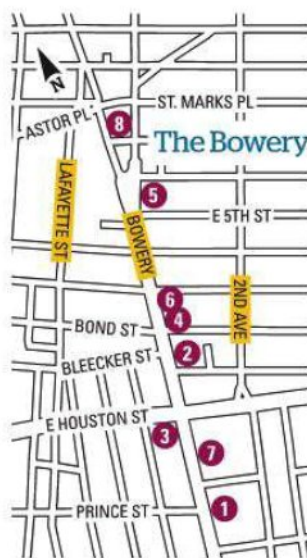
For most of the 19th century, the Bowery served as the city's entertainment center. New Yorkers came here to eat, drink, and see theater. But in 1878 a new elevated railway above the Bowery suddenly cast the area in daytime shadows, inspiring illicit behavior and, eventually, a migration elsewhere for most of the Bowery's legitimate businesses (theaters, for example, fled to Broadway in Midtown).

In the last half of the 20th century, artists—Mark Rothko, Jean-Michel Basquiat, Maya Lin, Keith Haring—began moving into the area, taking advantage of the spacious living quarters and cheap rents. Bands that got their start at the legendary (and recently defunct) club CBGB—The Ramones, Blondie, Patti Smith—all came to roost on the Bowery at one time or another.

No surprise, then, that in 2007 the trailblazing New Museum (1), which showcases the work of underrepresented contemporary artists, opened its doors on the Bowery with a striking new building that resembles a stack of seven off-kilter boxes. "We wanted to help pioneer the rebirth of the Bowery," says Lisa Phillips, the New Museum's director.

And that they did. Well-turned-out crowds flock to new restaurants like Michelin-starred chef Daniel Boulud's meat-and-beer mecca, DBGB (2); Pulino's (3), owned by arbiter of New York dining cool Keith McNally; and southern-accented Peels (4).

The brash Cooper Square Hotel (5), which looks like an escapee from the Dubai skyline, now competes for guests with the posh Bowery Hotel (6). Three Pritzker Prize-winning architects have new buildings on the Bowery: Sir Norman Foster's sleek Sperone Westwater art gallery (7), Thom Mayne's seemingly armor-clad Cooper Union building (8), and Tokyo-based SANAA's



**AROUND THE CORNER** Ask any doughnut expert—and yes, they do exist—his or her opinion on the best doughnuts in the country, and you'll likely get pointed to the Lower East Side. There, Mark Isreal runs the Doughnut Plant (379 Grand

Street), which serves doughnuts made from all natural ingredients, including fruit from farmers markets and nuts roasted on-site. Signature flavors include crème brûlée and tres leches, but fans line up for the seasonal appearances of flavors like marzipan and rose petal. Isreal opens a second location at the Chelsea Hotel this spring. —D.F.

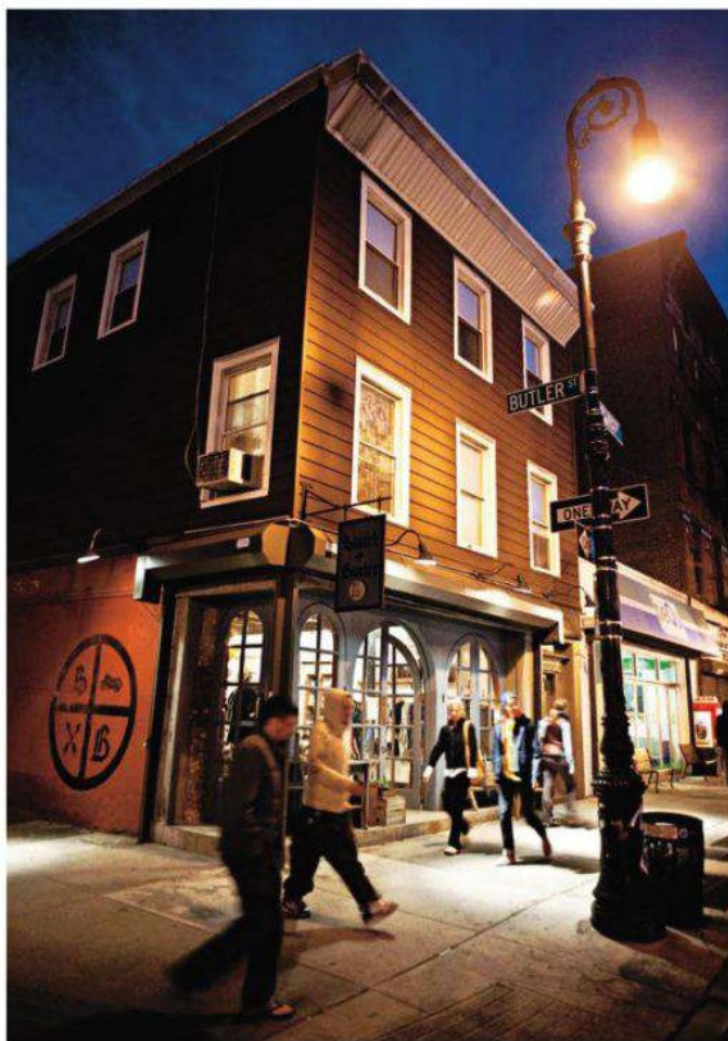




Clockwise from above: Bowery bests include the view from the 21st floor penthouse terrace of the Cooper Square Hotel and the Piggy Burger at DBGB restaurant. A room at the Bowery Hotel comes with the free use of bicycles. A waiter at DBGB adjusts his tie at the bar's inscribed mirror.







Clockwise from above: Brooklynites find classic clothing labels such as Woolrich and Pendleton at Smith + Butler (located at the intersection of those two streets). Scenes from the film *Eat, Pray, Love* were filmed at French bistro Robin des Bois. Owner Rae Cohen calls Mile End a "Montreal Jewish deli in Brooklyn." Stinky Bklyn stocks an expansive array of cheese from nearby farms and around the world.



New Museum. And the Bowery's last flophouse? An upscale hotel company recently bought the building. That means in a year or two, you can expect to see a new "it" place to lay your head.

—David Farley

## BOERUM HILL

**Trees—and fine dining—grow in this low-key Brooklyn neighborhood, a favorite of New York's creative class.**

**B**ROOKLYN IS BIG. Real big. If it were a separate city, it would rank as America's fourth largest, more populated than Boston, Seattle, and San Francisco combined. Recommending one neighborhood inside its amorphous boundaries is no easy task. But exit the F train at Bergen, and before the subway rumble fades, you'll smell wood-burning fireplaces, hear the piping call of a blue jay, and witness block after block of blossoming cherry and dogwood trees, crooked sidewalks, and stunted Italianate row houses. Despite what some people may think, the borough isn't limited to roller coasters and tattooed Williamsburg hipsters. Brooklyn has a soft side, too.

For urban-weary Manhattanites, Boerum Hill—originally named after Simon Boerum's 18th-century family farm—has long served as an express getaway to "the country." Developed from 1840 to 1870 between leafy and elegant Brooklyn Heights and pious and prominent Park Slope, the neighborhood lacked the grandeur of both. Its low-key sensibility continues today, ensuring its place as a sweet spot favored by NYC's creative class, particularly editors and writers who can regularly be found nursing pints at The Brooklyn Inn (1), one of several speakeasies from the neighborhood's Irish-dominated Prohibition period.

Boerum Hill's ancient corn, squash, and bean fields now lie deep underneath its brownstones and acorn-strewn streets. The area has since become particularly known for its food. The neighborhood's main corridor, Smith Street, bucked Manhattan's celebrity chef trend and took advantage of its farm heritage by spearheading the city's locavore movement five years ago. The Franco-forward eatery Saul (2) snagged a Michelin star in 2007 for homey dishes such as pan-roasted rabbit with sweet corn and heirloom beets with Honeycrisp apples. Newcomer Brooklyn Fare (3) clinched the area's food status in 2010 when it received two Michelin stars, a Kings County first. The casual café/grocery store now requires reservations six weeks in

advance. One stretch of Smith Street is home to five different French restaurants, including bric-a-brac Robin des Bois (4). Its Thursday night \$1-oyster special is popular with locals. In July, three blocks of Smith are closed to traffic for a Bastille Day fête.

But there's more to Boerum than French fare. Mile End (5) on Hoyt Street gave the city its first taste of Montreal-style smoked meat and sweet, chewy bagels, earning it a nod from *New York* magazine as Best Deli of 2010. Shoppers find \$20 Hecho en Brooklyn T-shirts at Brooklyn Tattoo (6), attend readings by such local authors as Jonathan Franzen at Book Court (7), buy Brooklyn wine totes from Annie's Blue Ribbon General Store (8), and even fill them with vino made at one of Brooklyn's wineries in Red Hook at Brooklyn Wine Exchange (9).

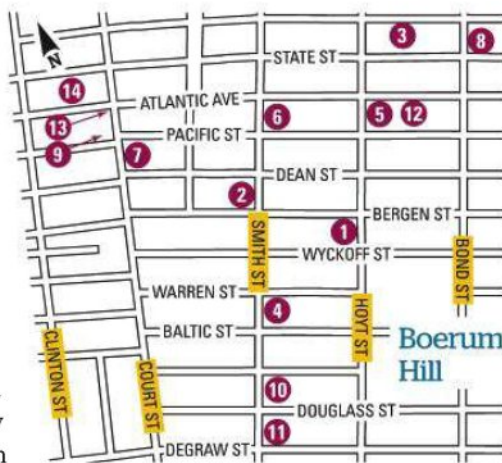
A few blocks south, where Boerum bleeds into neighboring Carroll Gardens, Smith + Butler (10) purveys classic upscale menswear and vintage motorcycle helmets, and cheese shop Stinky Bklyn (11) fills an all-Brooklyn-made food basket with locally made pickles, cookies, and chocolates.

After eating and shopping, walk 15 minutes west to check out the new Pier 6 extension of Brooklyn Bridge Park stretching along the waterfront from the end of Atlantic Avenue.

Yes, changes loom in Boerum. A recent rash of indie actors, including Michelle Williams and Emily Mortimer, have replaced old guard residents, such as writer Jonathan Lethem, who championed Boerum Hill in his book *Motherless Brooklyn* before moving to California in 2010. And Atlantic Avenue is undergoing an upscale corporate makeover: Interior designer Jonathan Adler (12) and designer discount retailer Barney's Co-Op (13) have both opened outposts here recently.

Boerum's Middle Eastern community, also concentrated along Atlantic Avenue, is the most threatened by this upgrade. Colorful fruit stands sit beside Yemeni travel agencies and Lebanese restaurants that serve *fattoush* and baked kibbe. No grocer is more beloved than Brooklyn-born Charlie Sahadi, whose family has run Sahadi's (14) since 1895. Known for its candies, olives, and fragrant roasted pistachios, Sahadi's also has the best spicy hummus in the city, hands down. Many a shopper can be seen buying a container en route to a sunset picnic along the water. Sahadi has faith in the area's evolution and even plans an expansion of his store. "Walk down any street today," he says, "and you'll hear different languages and see different religions and people with different skin colors living together as brother and sister."

—Adam H. Graham



**AROUND THE CORNER** Wander 15 minutes south on Court Street to Carroll Gardens, an Italian neighborhood having its own food renaissance, largely due to Frank Falcinelli and Frank Castronovo, owners of Frankies Spuntino (457

Court Street) and its adjacent sister restaurant Prime Meats (465 Court Street), which plates up homegrown German food. The Franks emphasize affordable, high-quality ingredients for items like their sausage and broccoli rabe sandwich (left) and attention to detail, right down to the period coat hooks and suspender-clad servers. —A.H.G.





**By David Roberts**  
**Photographs by Dawn Kish**

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## MESA VERDE



Outside the famous national park known for its ancient cliff dwellings lies a remote preserve that has ruins to explore—just as the Anasazi left them.



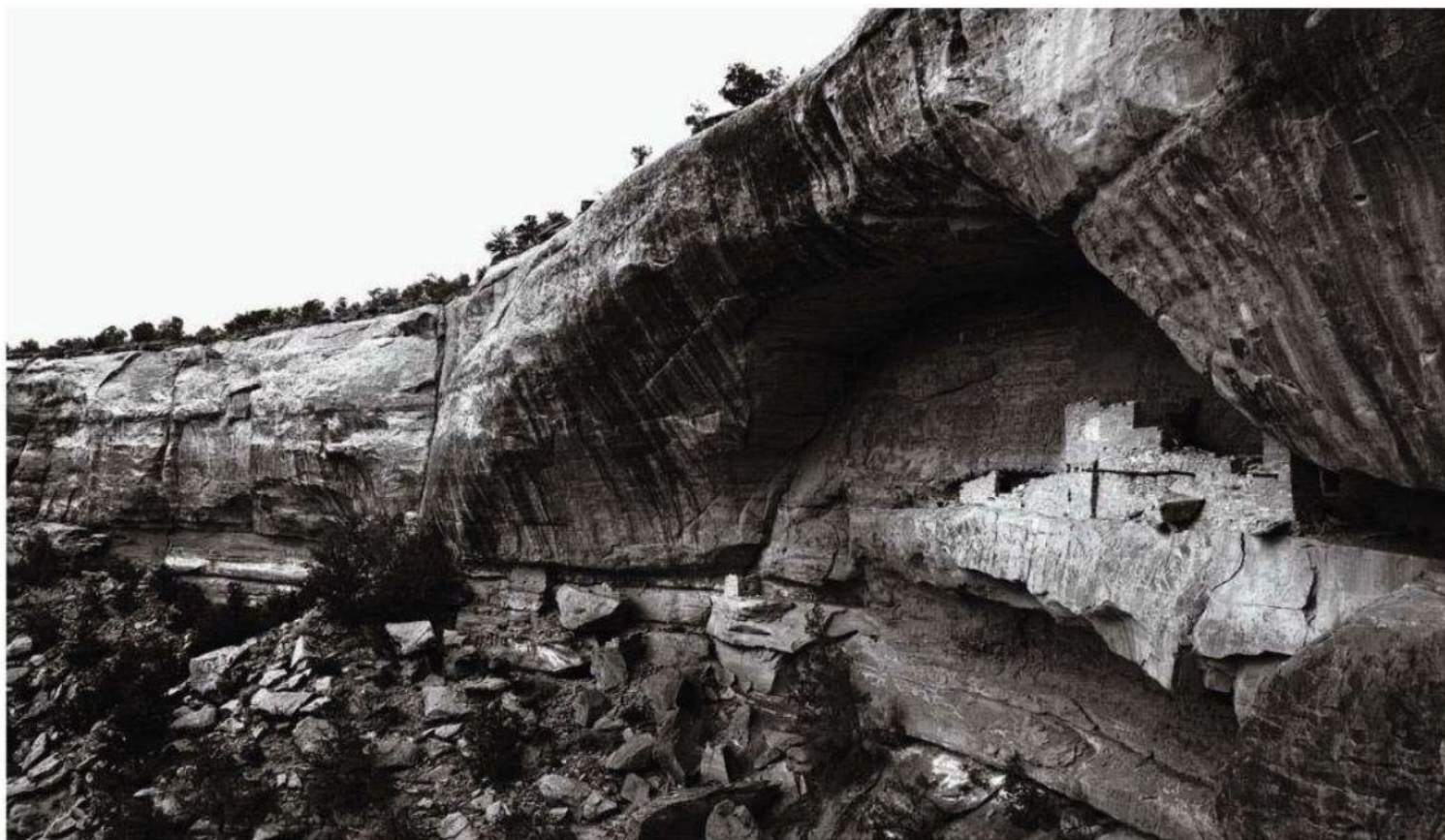
**M**id-November: sky gray to the horizon but the air still warm. The last brown scrub oak leaves curling closed toward winter. Silence, except for a solitary croaking raven. And high on the ledge before us, defended by 60 feet of relentlessly overhanging cliff, a small, two-story village made of stones and mud and wooden beams, where no one has lived for more than seven centuries.

Had the Ute had their way in 1911, we would not be allowed to be here today. Had the National Park Service had its way, we would have applied for a permit at the headquarters in Mesa Verde, boarded a bus with 50-odd strangers, assembled beneath the ruin to hear a canned spiel, climbed a metal ladder bolted to the cliff, and made a hasty tour of one or two over-restored rooms—the rest of the village being deemed too sensitive for bumbling tourists to visit.

But on that day in November the four of us and Ute guide Tommy May had all of Lion Canyon to ourselves. For that matter, we had, it seemed, the whole of the Ute Mountain Tribal Park, all 125,000 acres of it, to ourselves.

The ruin before us had been named Eagle Nest House in 1913 by the pioneering archaeologist Earl Morris, who partially excavated it. The village had been built by the Anasazi (ancestral Puebloans), those geniuses of the vertical, in two spurts of construction, between A.D. 1130 and 1150 and again between 1205 and 1220. Shortly thereafter, the place was abandoned for good, as part of the mass exodus of all the cliff dwellers from the Colorado Plateau, still the greatest of all Anasazi mysteries.

Morris had a knack for the vertical himself. In his official report, he describes the effort it took to climb up to the ruin. None of the trees that grow in Lion Canyon comes anywhere close to 60 feet in height, so Morris had to lean one dead timber against



Eagle Nest House, clinging to a cliff under a protective alcove, is still littered with fragments of 13th-century Puebloan life, despite having been rediscovered more than a hundred years ago. *Right:* Hiker Gavin Wilson approaches the Lion House, named after resident cougars. *Opening pages:* Writer David Roberts, at left, and Ute guide Tommy May peer into the kiva, or communal room, of the Porcupine House ruin, situated at lower elevation near a spring.









Above: Wilson climbs a sturdy wooden ladder to Eagle Nest House. Below: Rock paintings, or pictographs, as well as rock carvings, called petroglyphs, are found along the park road that leads to the cliff dwellings; some of the images were made by modern Ute and others by the Anasazi centuries ago.





# EAGLE NEST HOUSE

**MAY HAVE BEEN A LAST-DITCH REFUGE AGAINST OTHER STARVING ANASAZI WHO MIGHT COME TO RAID AND KILL.**

the cliff, climb that one, drag up another log, lash its end to the previous one, and so on. As he drily wrote in 1919, “The top of the fourth pair of poles reached to the ledge. Even after they had been securely fastened at the top, it was not until the next day that my workmen could be prevailed upon to attempt the ascent.”

In Eagle Nest House, Morris found and retrieved bone tools, grinding stones, yucca sandals, pieces of string woven from yucca fiber, and a human burial. He seemed to believe that he was the first human to enter the ruin since the last Anasazi had departed in the 13th century, but he was wrong. More than two decades before him, Richard and John Wetherill—ranchers based in the town of Mancos, Colorado, who learned archaeology by trial and error in Mesa Verde—had pulled off the log-ladder trick to explore the lofty site. The Wetherills left no record of their adventure, but a few miles to the north beneath an equally inaccessible ruin, which they also cracked with log ladders, Al, a third Wetherill brother (five brothers all told), scrawled a charcoal boast on the cliff:

*We got in there.  
Ye need not try.*

ALL FOUR OF US in November were veteran rock climbers, but there was no way in hell our group—wilderness guide Vaughn Hadenfeldt; photographer Dawn Kish; Kish’s boyfriend, Gavin Wilson; and I—would have trusted lashed-together poles to gain access to Eagle Nest. Yet

that is surely how the Anasazi got to the ledge in the first place, before building what Morris called as “picturesque and majestic” a cliff dwelling as any in the whole Mesa Verde region. Instead, we climbed a sturdy, 40-foot wooden ladder that the Ute had propped against the cliff at the extreme eastern end of the ledge.

From the top of the ladder, we scuttled along the ledge and entered the ancient village. Some of the nearly 800-year-old rooms were better left unexplored, bounded by walls too fragile to risk damaging. But on the floors of the closer rooms we found scores of potsherds, decorated in an array of patterns ranging from corrugated to Mancos black-on-white. And there were corncobs everywhere, lying where the ancients had tossed them aside after plucking loose their kernels to grind into the flour that made up the staple Anasazi food. In Mesa Verde National Park, you can no longer find potsherds or corncobs on the ground; the rangers long ago swept up every last artifact for curation in plastic bags and metal drawers where few ever see them.

Inside the ruin’s kiva—a round, subterranean chamber that centers the village—we were entranced to see the plaster of the walls painted with zigzag patterns. A little later, we sat at the far end of the access ledge, looking at the canyon spread out below

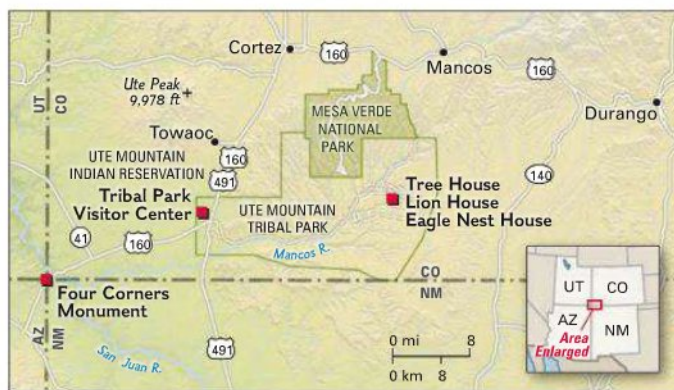
us. In a moment of foolish enthusiasm, I blurted out, “What a beautiful place to live!”

“It’s got a great view,” Hadenfeldt agreed. “But it would have been a desperate place to live.”

He was right, pointing up the fundamental paradox of these dwellings. The villages built in the 13th century were dictated by defensive, not aesthetic, motives. Famine, drought, the overhunting of big game, deforestation, and perhaps spiritual crises had turned the Anasazi world into a nightmare landscape of survival. Eagle Nest House may have been a last-ditch refuge against other Anasazi who themselves were starving and who might come at any time to raid and kill. But in extremis, an all-encompassing fear had given birth to the most beautiful prehistoric structures in what is now the United States.

So well-preserved was Eagle Nest in its arching natural alcove that I could not help contemplating the Anasazi cliché first coined

by Richard Wetherill when he discovered Mesa Verde’s Cliff Palace in December 1888: It looked as though the Old Ones had left only a week ago, leaving their things behind, fully intending to return.



LOOK AT A MAP of Colorado. There, just southeast of the town of Cortez, lies the zigzag-bordered tract (pink on my map) of Mesa Verde National Park, one of the most popular tourist destinations in the

Southwest. Immediately adjoining it on the south (purple on my map) is the much larger domain of Ute Mountain Tribal Park—itself a subdivision of the Ute Mountain Indian Reservation, which stretches west to the Utah border and south into New Mexico.

The land was not always so neatly divided. When Anglo-Americans started settling Colorado in the mid-19th century, virtually the whole of the future Centennial State was Ute homeland. An 1868 treaty established a Ute reservation covering most of the western half of Colorado. Successive treaties whittled the reservation smaller and smaller, as such towns as Durango, Cortez, Silverton, Rico, and Dolores sprang up.

Starting in the late 1880s, local ranchers, led by the five Wetherill brothers, explored the Anasazi ruins, hauling out immense loads of artifacts, skeletons, and mummies, only a small portion of which found their way to museums. In 1906, the same year that the new Antiquities Act outlawed such looting, President Teddy Roosevelt established Mesa Verde National Park to preserve wondrous ancient villages like Cliff Palace, Spruce Tree House, and Balcony House.

The new park cut another chunk out of the Ute Reservation,



# HE HELD A BIG STONE

**THAT HAD NOTCHES CHISELED ON BOTH EDGES, WHERE A LIMB WOULD'VE BEEN LASHED TO SERVE AS A HANDLE.**

but its architects made a slight blunder. The southern border they drew cut an arbitrary line through the Anasazi heartland, a culturally unified region comprising the densest and richest aggregation of 13th-century cliff dwellings in the country. The border left Eagle Nest House and scores of other ruins on Ute land outside of the national park.

Only five years later, in 1911, government officials tried to rip loose the lands the park had overlooked. An acrimonious meeting between the bureaucrats and Ute elders took place at Navajo Springs on the reservation. Surviving minutes make for poignant reading. Commissioner Frederick H. Abbott began:

"The Ute Indians have never used that land where the ruins are... When the government finds old ruins on land that it wants to take for public purposes, it has the right to take it."

But Tribal Council member Nathan Wing fired back: "Those old ruins belong to us... Several years ago we heard that some white people took everything out of there, dishes, bones, and everything they found. The last time I was there I never took anything away from those houses. We always leave them alone."

Remarkably, the government failed to talk the Ute into trading away or selling the Mancos River canyons. But for the next 60 years, the people lived in fear that "Washington" (as natives of the Southwest lumped together the President and all other federal officials) would steal their land. Meanwhile, a handful of archaeologists, including Earl Morris, dug in the ruins on Ute land, apparently without bothering to ask tribal leaders for permission.

In the 1960s, a brilliant Ute elder named Chief Jack House proposed the establishment of Ute Mountain Tribal Park. In retrospect, it was the perfect solution, for it kept the Mancos canyons in native hands while allowing tourists to see the park's backcountry wonders. To visit the ruins of Lion Canyon today, as we did, you must make a reservation, pay a fee, and be accompanied by a Ute guide. This relatively easy transaction, however, either scares off park-bagging tourists or never crosses their radar.

Today, Mesa Verde National Park attracts 565,000 visitors a year. In busier years (during the late 1990s), the traffic jam on the paved road past Cliff Palace and Spruce Tree House grew so intense that a substantial portion of visitors never left their cars, creeping along the six-mile, one-way loop past full-up parking lots, only to exit the park disappointed.

The Ute Mountain Tribal Park doesn't keep an annual visitor

tally, but I doubt that it reaches 3,000. As a result, you can spend a whole day examining magnificent ruins without distraction. And, as Nathan Wing swore nearly a century ago, the Ute have left the stuff in place. Except for the booty the archaeologists have carted away, the artifacts—potsherds, corncocks, strands of yucca string, chips of colored chert flaked to make arrowheads—are still there on the ground, to be picked up, fondled in one's fingers, then placed back where the Anasazi discarded them more than 700 years ago.

TOMMY MAY HAD BEEN MY GUIDE in the tribal park on another memorable visit 16 years earlier. I remembered him well (and told him so), but it was evident he didn't remember

me. At 61, May had a grizzled face, long salt-and-pepper hair tied back in a ponytail, and a bowlegged limp as he favored his left foot. He wore his official khaki ranger shirt but also blue jeans slung low on his waist. May is a fellow of few words and has the disconcerting habit of sometimes failing to answer your question or answering it with a snippet of lore that has nothing to do with what you asked.

May drove the park vehicle, while Hadenfeldt ferried the four of us in his heavy-duty pickup truck. (Visitors can pay extra for private tours like ours, and you have the option to be driven around in a park-supplied vehicle, if you don't have a four-

wheel drive of your own.) There are no paved roads in the park, and the dirt tracks that cross the mesa tops toward the canyons dwindle into rutted clay, impassable in rain or snow. It's 40 miles from the visitor center to the Lion Canyon trailhead, but there was much to see along the way—including, in the first half hour, a bear cub ambling through the sagebrush. May told us the cub had been hanging out on the Mancos River flats for months, apparently bereft of its mother.

As the short, late autumnal day wheeled by, we visited five major cliff dwellings. Lion House, the largest ruin in the park, dazzled us with the remnants of a rare three-story tower, as well as six kivas, no two alike. "A family of mountain lions used to live here," May explained, "that's why they call it Lion House."

Porcupine House, tucked at the head of an unnamed fork of Johnson Canyon, abounded in two-story buildings with enigmatic, T-shaped doorways (broader at your shoulders than at your knees). And in Tree House, I was delighted to find the finely engraved



The collared lizard, this one sunning itself, is among the reptiles, also including the prairie rattlesnake, that are common in the tribal park.



signatures of John and Al Wetherill, carved sideways into Anasazi grinding slicks, scallop-shaped depressions in the bedrock where (we presume) the ancients sharpened their ax blades.

For decades, the Mesa Verde rangers decried the Wetherills as greedy, destructive pothunters, but they are heroes to many of us. Almost entirely self-taught, they became better archaeologists than some of the leading professionals of the day. And unlike many of their cowboy colleagues in Durango and Cortez, who sold off the goodies they had dug up to any curio hunter who happened by, the Wetherills tried to keep their collections intact. Today, those collections anchor the Southwest holdings of the American Museum of Natural History and the National Museum of the American Indian.

Al Wetherill's signature, scrawled on January 1, 1888, was one of the earliest I had ever seen from the Wetherills, dating from 11 months prior to Richard's monumental discovery of Cliff Palace. In recent years, well-meaning but clueless ruin lovers have rubbed out some of the signatures of the Wetherills and other pioneers. Those erasures, in fact, amount to desecration, causing tragic losses in the historical record—not to mention that the act of obliterating them violates the very law (the Antiquities Act of 1906) that was passed to save Mesa Verde.

Kish, Hadenfeldt, and I had visited countless Anasazi ruins all over the Southwest, but for Wilson such places were relatively novel. It's always useful to have a rookie along on such trips, as I realized again when, at the end of the long day, I asked Wilson what struck him most forcefully about the ruins. A visual artist and photographer, he thought for a moment, then said, "It's that the ruins don't look planned. It's a kind of organic architecture. Each one so beautifully and perfectly fits into the idiosyncratic space of its natural alcove. I've never seen anything like it."

**A**N ODDITY ABOUT THE FAMOUS ruins in Mesa Verde National Park is that visitors get to see very little rock art. In fact, only the short Petroglyph Trail takes the tourist past any of the hallucinatory panels that the Old Ones were wont to carve into the cliff faces.

Both coming and going along the gravel road up the Mancos Valley, however, May signaled stop after stop so we could get out of our vehicles and scramble up the hillside to one stunning frieze after another. Here, as early as 3,000 years ago, the Anasazi had gouged into the sandstone petroglyph panels of humanoids, bighorn sheep, spear-thrower symbols, and abstract grids.

But equally beguiling were the panels of Ute rock art, most of them pictographs limned in red ocher, an iron oxide earth found elsewhere in the canyon and mixed with water to make a vivid paint. We saw a chief with a bona fide warbonnet, a woman with three eyes (one in her forehead), a sun weeping tears.

The pièce de résistance was the Jack House panel, a continuous cliff canvas painted entirely by one man sometime between the 1930s and the 1960s. After the 1911 impasse between the government and the Ute leaders, factions formed within the tribe, reaching a bitter standoff in the late 1950s. The conservatives, led by Nathan Wing, son of the man of the same name who had fended off Commissioner Abbott, wanted to keep white folks out of the Mancos canyons forever.

Even the moderates feared that as Southwest tourism gathered steam, the government would find some way to take over Lion and Johnson and the other ruins-riddled canyons and turn them into a national park like Mesa Verde.

It was Jack House—son of Acowitz, the Ute chief who in the

1880s had tipped off the Wetherills about the hidden cliff villages—who conceived of a compromise: a Ute-administered tribal park, which would limit the numbers of visitors (12 per day in backcountry ruins is the present rule), while preserving the ruins by keeping them relatively hard to get to and supervising each tour with a native guide.

Slowly, as if in an art gallery, we walked from right to left along the cliff. Jack House was handy with a brush. We saw a bison in profile, muzzle to the ground, hump reared high. Several women, face on, one bearing a cradleboard. A guy with a head sprouting feathers, an image that someone—May thought it was Ute teenagers—had savagely gouged with an ax. But the vandals had spared the masterpiece in the center—a man on horseback, with reins, saddle, stirrup, chaps, and even the owner's brand on the horse's flank, all lovingly delineated. In case we wondered who the mounted figure was, Jack House had carved his own name, in English, right through the saddle and the horse's neck.

"There was a big fight between the Wings and Jack House," May said. "He died in 1971. The ones who didn't like what he had been doing burned down his house. It was right over there." May pointed south.

Later, I spoke with my friend Fred Blackburn, who had conducted an exhaustive survey in the 1990s, along with then tribal park director Veronica Cuthair, of historic inscriptions inside the park. "Jack House knew the government would take over the canyons and turn them into another Mesa Verde," Blackburn said. "The tribal park saved the place. But House was worried about the traditions vanishing. He made those paintings to preserve the Ute culture. Each one has layer upon layer of meaning."

With the light fading in the west, we stopped at one last Anasazi petroglyph panel, which adorned a rock band 150 feet above the road. As the four of us hiked quickly up the slope, May dawdled behind. All day, I had noticed him pausing, poking behind rocks, peering into crannies, as if in search of some lost possession.

Now he said softly, "Look at this."

He held in his hands a big, oblate, greenish-gray stone. Just another rock, I thought, until I saw that the thing had been hafted, notches chiseled on both edges, where a stout limb, perhaps of juniper, would have been lashed to serve as a handle.

"Hey, Vaughn!" I called out, "come here a minute."

It was the find of the day, designed like a stone axhead but four or five times too big. Hadenfeldt turned the stone over and over in his hands. "It's a maul," he muttered. "A honking big one. It's like a sledgehammer. Those guys might've used it to bash away the sagebrush, so they could plant their corn or beans."

Hadenfeldt handed me the tool so that he could photograph it. Kish took a flurry of shots as well. "I've seen a few of these," Hadenfeldt said, "but this is by far the biggest. Man, can you imagine swinging this thing?"

Each of us handled the stone, marveling at its heft and shape. A museum would not have stashed such an artifact in a back room drawer: The tool was so rare that it would have gone on permanent display. But when we were through admiring the maul, May put it back where he found it, half-hidden among other nondescript stones beneath a scraggly sagebrush.

It's still there.

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Massachusetts-based writer DAVID ROBERTS is the author of six books about adventure and history in the Southwest, including *In Search of the Old Ones*. Photographer DAWN KISH, an Arizona native, has shot numerous outdoor adventure assignments for *Climbing*, *Outside*, *National Geographic Adventure*, *Backpacker*, and other magazines.



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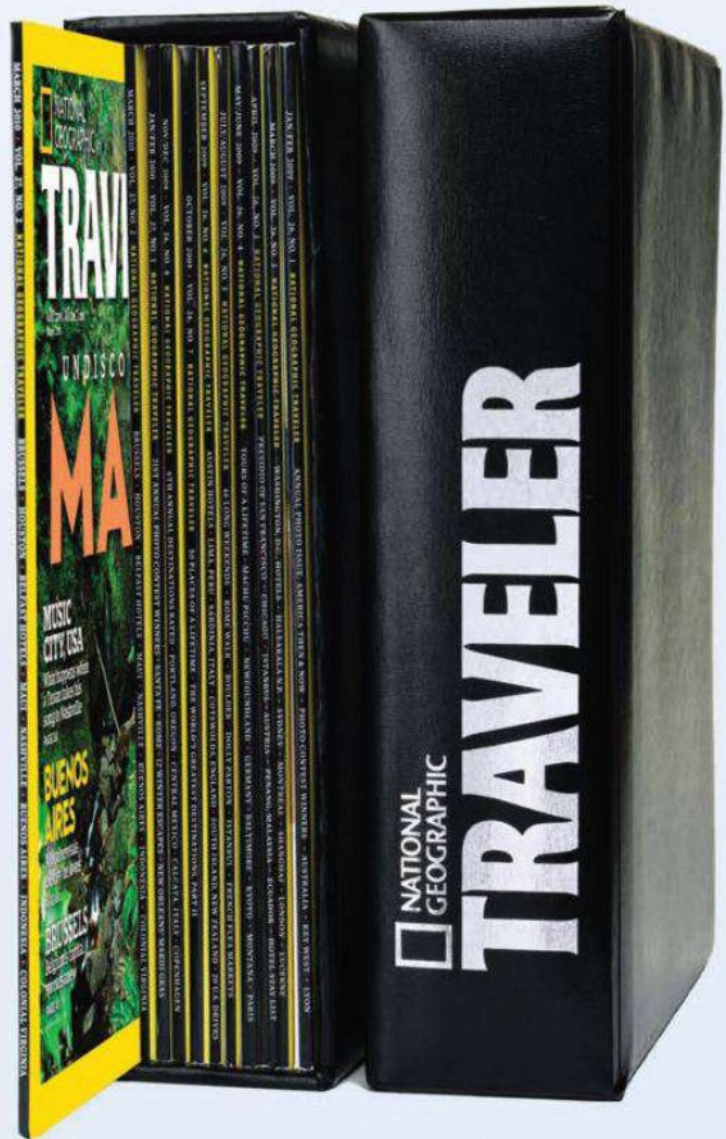


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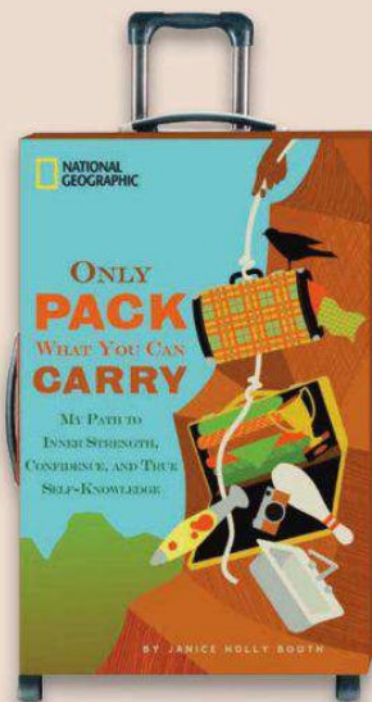
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APRIL 7-MAY 1 PHILADELPHIA

**Arts Dynamo** Over 1,500 artists descend on the city for the Philadelphia International Festival of the Arts, featuring performances by Wynton Marsalis and ?uestlove from The Roots, plus dance (such as Rennie Harris Puremovement, *below*),

comedy, circus arts, live music, ballet, food, fashion, and more. The festival aims to re-create Paris in the early 20th century, a dynamic era of cultural collaboration among painters, dancers, writers, and musicians. Ticket packages for families, dance buffs, funk fans, and Francophiles will be available. [www.pifa.org](http://www.pifa.org)



# TRAVELER20

[ TRAVEL-WORTHY EVENTS AND HAPPENINGS ]

MARCH 26-APRIL 9

WASHINGTON, D.C.

**Beltway Blossoms** Come spring, the major traffic bottleneck in D.C. isn't along the Beltway but around the Tidal Basin. That's when more than a million people converge on the capital's blooming cherry trees, originally gifted in 1912 by the mayor of Tokyo. The frothy clouds of pink and white inspire a two-week festival of art exhibits, a ten-mile run, a sustainable sushi tasting, and more. It culminates in a parade on April 9, with marching bands, balloons, and floats making their way down Constitution Avenue. [www.nationalcherryblossomfestival.org](http://www.nationalcherryblossomfestival.org)

MARCH 28-APRIL 3

VANCOUVER, BRITISH COLUMBIA

**Fruits of the Vine** Now in its 33rd year, the Vancouver Playhouse International Wine Festival has grown from a theater fundraiser to one of the biggest and oldest consumer wine festivals in the world. This year's focus is on wines from Spain and on fortified wines. Sippers can explore 760 wines from 176 wineries in 15 countries. [www.playhousewinefest.com](http://www.playhousewinefest.com)

APRIL 2

KAILUA-KONA, HAWAII

**Skip Lunch** Paradise gets a little sweeter when chefs, candymakers, and chocolatiers converge on the Big Island for the Ninth Annual Kona Chocolate Festival & Symposium. Attendees can sample chocolate paired with wine, enjoy live music, and even try out some chocolate body art. And because Hawaii happens to be the only state in the U.S. where cacao is grown commercially, participants can join tours of local chocolate factories and cacao farms, and take workshops on cacao agriculture and chocolate working techniques. [www.konachocolatefestival.com](http://www.konachocolatefestival.com)

APRIL 5-7

CHINA

**A Time to Remember** After long and often frigid winters, the



APRIL 17-24 ANTIGUA, GUATEMALA

**Easter Parade** Locals in the colonial city of Antigua celebrate Semana Santa, the Holy Week before Easter, by creating *alfombras*, colorful and intricately designed carpets made of flowers, pigmented sawdust, pine needles, and other natural materials. On Good Friday, these fragrant carpets, which depict both biblical and Mayan symbols, line the cobblestone streets and are often completed just minutes before being trampled by processions of religious-themed floats that wind their way through the town. It often takes up to a hundred purple-robed carriers, or *curcuruchas*, to carry these floats, as they can weigh up to 7,000 pounds. [www.aroundantigua.com](http://www.aroundantigua.com)

APRIL 7-OCTOBER 30

NIAGARA-ON-THE-LAKE, ONTARIO

**Shaw at 50** For the past 50 years, the Shaw Festival has attracted playgoers to the heart of Niagara Wine Country. Started by a lawyer with a passion for the plays of George Bernard Shaw, the festival marks its half-century with new productions of Shaw classics

*Heartbreak House* and *Candida* as well as the musical *My Fair Lady*, which is based on Shaw's play *Pygmalion*. Birthday events include a forum July 23-24 with playwrights Tony Kushner and Suzan-Lori Parks (whose *Topdog/Underdog* is one of the plays produced this year) and special behind-the-scenes ticket packages. [www.shawfest.com](http://www.shawfest.com)

THE KIMMEL CENTER (UPPER), DANNY LEHMAN/CORBIS (LOWER)



## APRIL 7-OCTOBER 30

### SAN FRANCISCO

**Bad Seeds** Mother Nature's dark side will be in full bloom this spring when San Francisco's Conservatory of Flowers assembles a cast of horticultural villains for its "Wicked Plants" exhibit. The century-old Victorian building (the nation's oldest glass and wood greenhouse) transforms into a secret garden of dangerous, poisonous, and generally gruesome plants, all culled from the best-selling book by Amy Stewart, *Wicked Plants: The Weed that Killed Lincoln's Mother & Other Botanical Atrocities*. Stewart will be on hand to sign books at 7 p.m. on June 1. [www.conservatoryofflowers.org](http://www.conservatoryofflowers.org)

## APRIL 13-15

### LUANG PRABANG, LAOS

**New Year's Wishes** Laotians celebrate the Laotian New Year, Pi Mai, with a water-drenched festival that can extend more than a week in such places as the culturally rich town of Luang Prabang. Pi Mai is a time of cleansing, which accounts for the roving groups of celebrants dousing anyone they meet—travelers included—with water and colored powder. Escape the impromptu showers by heading to the Wat Xieng Thong temple to watch well-dressed devotees taking their turn to wash the golden Buddha statue and deliver offerings of flowers and lighted candles.

## APRIL 13-24

### CANNON BEACH, OREGON

**For the Birds** Every year, crowds gather in the shadow of Haystack Rock along Oregon's Cannon Beach to see the return of the tufted puffins, which nest there from April to August. The Haystack Rock Awareness Program sets up viewing stations so visitors can catch a glimpse of the funny-looking birds (their clownish beaks and slicked-back feathers give them the semblance of a nutty professor). Experts suggest visiting the north side of the rock, where the bulk of the nests can be seen, in the early morning or at low tide. The puffins are the official mascots of Cannon Beach's 12 Days of Earth Day celebrations, a series of events that will include art exhibits, yoga sessions, and documentary screenings. [www.cannonbeach.org](http://www.cannonbeach.org)

## APR. 15, 2011-MAY 2015

### BALTIMORE, MARYLAND

**All Aboard** Though the country stood divided during the Civil War, the B&O Railroad still served to connect it and played an integral role in the war strategy of both Union and Confederate generals. Northern troops used the trains to move soldiers and equipment, while Southern forces blocked rail lines in an attempt to thwart Union advancement. The Baltimore and Ohio Railroad museum recognizes the railroad's role in the war's sesquicentennial with "The War Came By Train," an exhibit of Civil War-era rail cars, engines, and many never-

before-exhibited military artifacts. [www.borail.org](http://www.borail.org)

## APRIL 18

### BOSTON

**Marathon Monday** Every year, the city shuts down for the annual 26.2-mile jaunt from Hopkinton to Copley Square. The world's oldest annual marathon draws some of the most elite runners on the planet, plus tens of thousands of others trying to pound their way up Heartbreak Hill. The best viewing points downtown are along Commonwealth Avenue, Beacon Street,

Florida Keys are so remote from the rest of the States that they could almost seem to be their own nation, or so goes the theory behind the creation of the Conch Republic. What began as a tongue-in-cheek response to a Border Control checkpoint along Highway 1 has now become an identity, and for the past 29 years, locals have hosted an annual celebration recognizing their "nation's" charms: fiddling contests, pirate parties, bed races, and a seven-foot-wide key lime pie. This year's stargazer cruise provides a particularly unique



## APRIL 30 UPPSALA, SWEDEN

**Northern Bonfire Night** The Walpurgis Eve spring festival is celebrated throughout central and northern Europe, but Uppsala, Sweden, ups the ante with its version, called Valborg. Students and alumni start the day in Sweden's oldest university town (circa 1477) with a breakfast of strawberries and champagne, then later gather with the throngs around bonfires to sing traditional folk songs. Other antics involve floating down the Fyrisan River on haphazard rafts, picnicking on herring in the parks, and donning their mortarboards before spraying each other with champagne. [www.upsalaturism.se](http://www.upsalaturism.se)

and Kenmore Square, where you can offer the runners moral support for the final few miles. [www.baa.org](http://www.baa.org)

## APRIL 22-26

### SYDNEY, AUSTRALIA

**Acrobats Amok** If running away to join the circus seems a bit dramatic, perhaps the Darling Harbour Hoopla is more your style. Over a hundred Australian and international gymnasts, acrobats, and circus performers converge at the harbor, transforming it into an interactive playground for the young and old. Free lessons will help hone juggling, plate-spinning, and hula-hooping skills. [www.darlingharbour.com](http://www.darlingharbour.com)

## APRIL 22-MAY 1

### KEY WEST, FLORIDA

**Conch Nation** The islands of the

celestial offering—both the Northern and Southern Cross can be viewed from the ship, and the Keys are one of the few places in the U.S. where that is possible. [www.conchrepublic.com](http://www.conchrepublic.com)

## APRIL 27-MAY 2

### TANKWA KAROO, SOUTH AFRICA

**Africa's Burning Man** If the elements of AfrikaBurn sound familiar—art festival, temporary community, gift economy—there's a reason for that. As Africa's regional Burning Man event, it holds to the principles of the founding festival in Nevada's Black Rock Desert. But the event is set on a private farm along one of the most remote stretches of road in South Africa. And instead of the Man, the effigy burned is the San Clan, which looks like a San rock art glyph

depicting a group of people. This year's festival theme is "Stof: The Primal Mud." *Stof* is the locals' word for dust, so it could be taken literally as the elements of the desert or more loosely as materialism. [www.afrikaburn.com](http://www.afrikaburn.com)

## APRIL 28-MAY 1

### WILKESBORO, NORTH CAROLINA

**Country Strong** In the foothills of the Great Smoky Mountains, a country quilt of musicians gets together on the campus of Wilkes Community College for MerleFest, where the four days feel like a family gathering. Iconic folk guitarist Doc Watson—from nearby Deep Gap—is the guiding force behind the festival, which is named after his late son. This year's program includes award-winning blues guitarist Rory Block, innovative bluegrass group Crooked Still, country star (and North Carolina native) Randy Travis, and folk storyteller David Holt. [www.merlefest.org](http://www.merlefest.org)

## APRIL 29

### LONDON

**A British Couple Get Hitched** Even if you're not on the guest list when Prince William weds Kate Middleton, you can join in the ballyhoo. Throngs are likely to line the route as Middleton makes her way to Westminster Abbey. She'll pass through The Mall and the Horse Guards Parade and into Parliament Square. After the ceremony, the newlyweds will proceed to Buckingham Palace. [www.visitlondon.com](http://www.visitlondon.com)

## APRIL 29-MAY 1, MAY 5-8

### NEW ORLEANS

**Musical Gumbo** Though locals call it simply "Jazz Fest," the New Orleans Jazz and Heritage Festival encompasses a spectacularly wide range of music. This year's lineup on 12 stages ranges from Arcade Fire to Lupe Fiasco and Bon Jovi to Ti-Coca & Wanga Nègès of Haiti. Mardi Gras Indians parade daily through the fairgrounds, and food tents sell po'boys and crawfish bread (spicy baked bread stuffed with crawfish tails and cheese). A kids area has music and crafts. [www.nojazzfest.com](http://www.nojazzfest.com)

## APRIL 29-MAY 15

### BRATISLAVA AND KOSICE, SLOVAKIA

**Face Off** Sixteen of the world's greatest hockey teams will take to the ice for the International Ice Hockey Federation's World Championship tournament, which celebrates its 75th anniversary this year. Over the course of two weeks, teams will meet for 56 games in Slovakia's two major cities, Kosice and the capital of Bratislava, where a state-of-the-art arena was rebuilt for the competition. The United States is set to compete against Norway, Sweden, and Austria in its first round of play. [www.iihf.com](http://www.iihf.com)

Reported by Amy Alipio, Alison Brick, Kerry Dexter, Janelle Nanos, Hope Rehak, and Christy Woodrow. Send events to [aalipio@ngs.org](mailto:aalipio@ngs.org).




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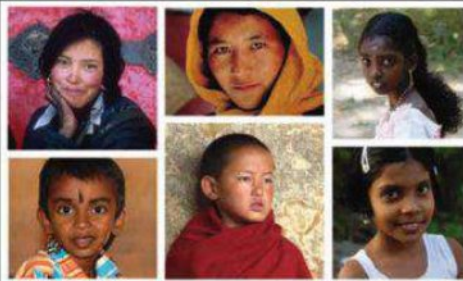
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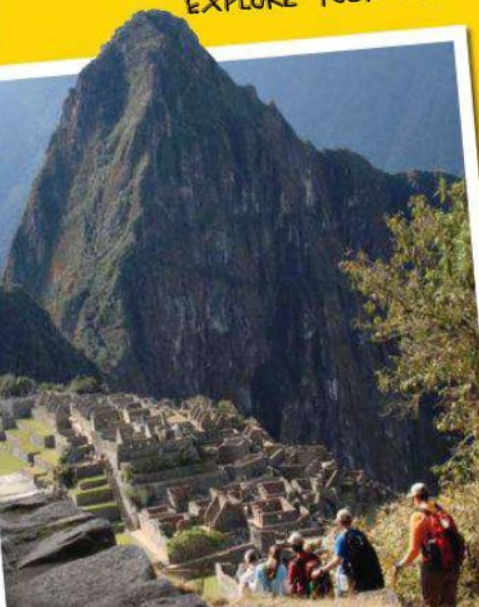


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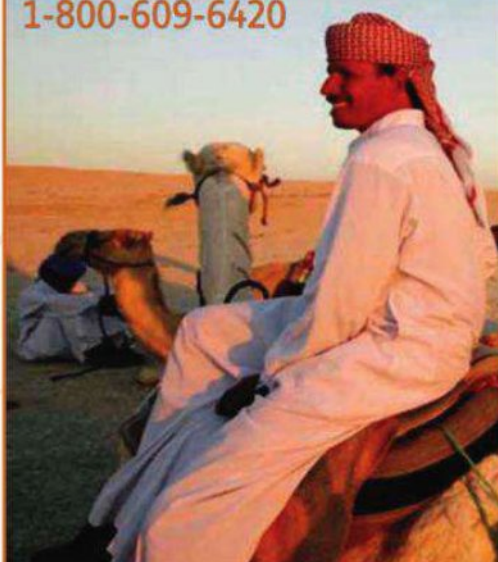
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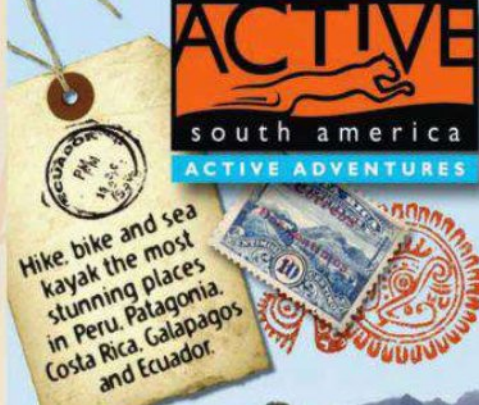
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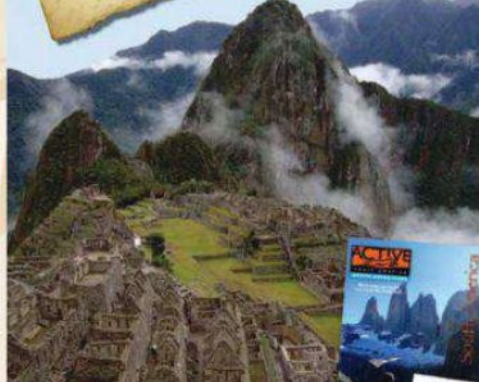


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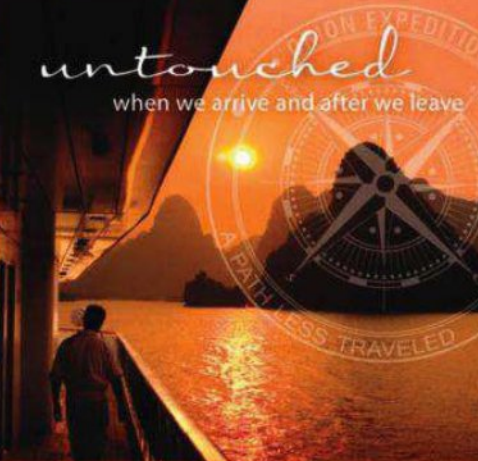
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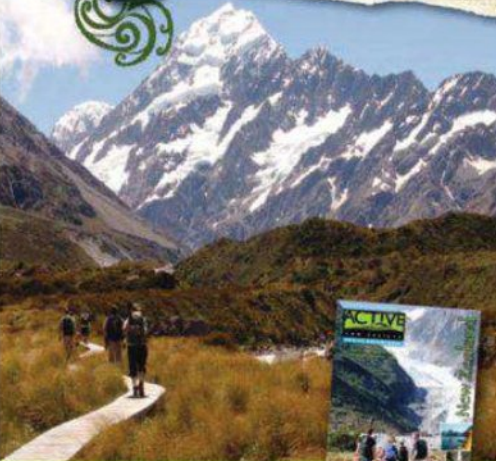
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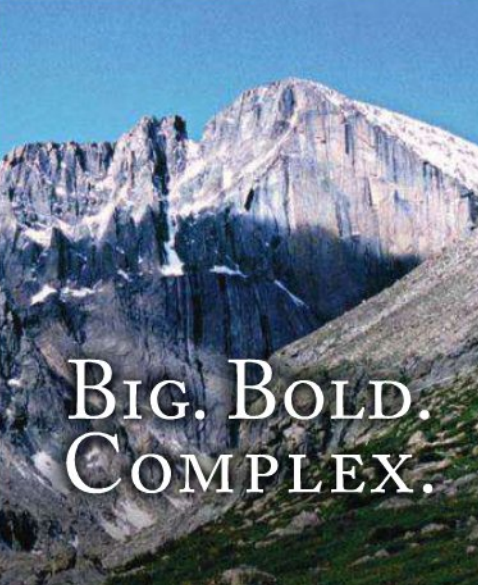





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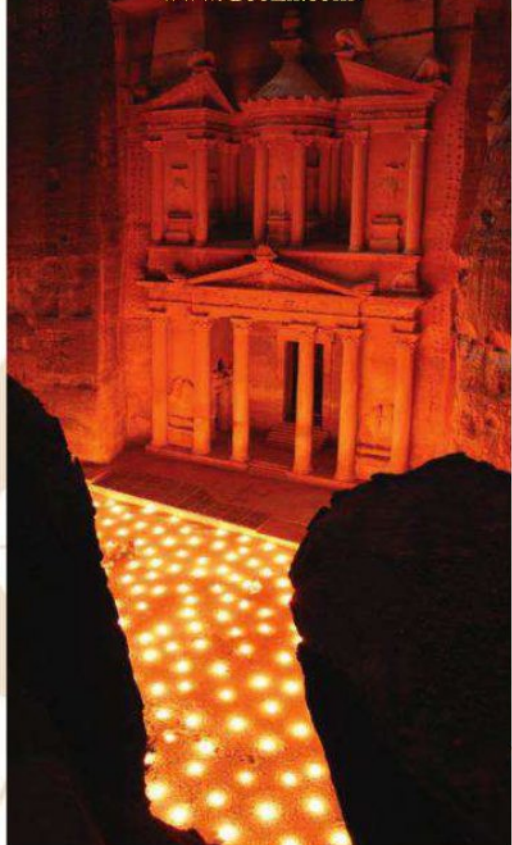
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Share Your Adventure photo by Melissa Miller





# Paddle Away For a Day

Photograph by Chas Jensen

**I**N AUGUST OF last year, I took a kayak trip with a friend through northern Wisconsin's Brule River State Forest. The late morning weather was perfect, and the river's water level was high, creating ideal conditions for rapids that can make for a wild ride. Pushing off from Stone's Bridge landing, we quickly joined the winding river and found ourselves using our paddles mainly to steer, as the current was fast enough to move us without effort. The Bois Brule River was used by Native Americans and European explorers, trappers, and traders, and as we floated along we took in the abundant wildlife that had drawn them here: eagles, kingfishers, mergansers, turtles, and a few fish passing by in the clear water below. We also passed the "Summer White House" where President Calvin Coolidge escaped in 1928 to enjoy "the cool woods, seclusion, and trout." It's now a historical site called Cedar Island Lodge. When we finally came upon the boathouse in the photo, I knew I had to capture it as a reminder of this beautiful place. It seemed to sum up the serenity and peace that was our reward for venturing into this remote section of the river.

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